COURIERS OF COURAGE

WILLIAM RUSSELL OWEN

Central BAPTIST
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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Couriers of Courage

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William Russell Owen

Author of
The Wise Men's Camel,
The Song at Sunrise,
Play Fair Professor,
The Love Letters of an Athlete

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD
OF THE
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Dedicated

TO

MY DEACONS AND TRUSTEES

Who Through the Years of
Unfailing Fellowship Have
Inspired Me in Preaching

THE GOSPEL OF COURAGE

N15491

A PRAYER FOR YOUTH

O Lord, our heavenly Father, we thank thee for the morning of life, for the fresh dew on the grass, the singing of the birds, and the sweet clean air that pervades all the world about us; and we thank thee too for golden youth, for manhood's morning and the breaking of womanhood's day; for the new awakening of life within us and the great world throbbing with possibilities calling to our untried powers.

Make us useful today in doing high-class work, in setting standards at play that are clean and wholesome and white, and when the day has closed, call us again by thy voice to our homes—to parents and firesides with hands unsoiled and our faith in thy tender care unmoved and unmovable. In Jesus' name—Amen.

Wm. Russell Owen.

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Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him. MATT. 21: 28-32.

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I

BOYHOOD AND THE COURIERS OF COURAGE

I

BOYHOOD AND THE COURIERS OF COURAGE

Hebrews 11: 13-16: These all died in the faith, . . . but we see them eager for a better land, that is to say, an heavenly one. (Weymouth.)

"And what shall I more say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jepthah; of David also and Samuel, and of the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises; stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of aliens. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy."

But we witness John Wesley, eager for a better land, that is, a heavenly one. We see John Calvin, too good to live in his unworthy age, and Roger Williams, waxing valiant in fight and winning for the world its trophy of religious liberty.

All of the world's progress may be traced along the trails blazed through the forests primeval of history by those men who, moved with the passion of the pathfinder, were the Couriers of Courage eager for a better land, that is to say, a heavenly one.

Perhaps the first Courier of Courage in all the world was Cain, for whatever may be said of him, we read that when the curse and sign of God was upon him Cain went out from the presence of Jehovah and dwelt in the land of Nod—the land of wandering. And Abraham heard God's voice and, eager for a better land, broke his way out from the worship of the Chaldean fire gods to teach all generations the worship of the one true God. And so Moses and David and Gideon and Ezra and Nehemiah; these men with their passion of God's purposes in their hearts, made the way clearer, hewed newer pathways through the ages of man. Sometimes they heard the voice of a voyage and, like Columbus, discovered a golden world of beauty; sometimes they heed the cry for conquest, or again the vision of victory, the wooing of war, or the message of a mighty mission calls them to blaze new highways in the progress of the human race. The passion and courage of these Couriers have ever inspired with heroic hope those who were followers of their time, and they have left a mighty challenge to the ages, which afterwards read the story of their deeds.

The Sowers of Courage

During the distressing days of the French invasion by Germany in 1914, many of the French were often discouraged and would find reason to criticise the army or the government, and became downhearted.

A league of young girls such as are represented in the Girl Reserves of the Young Women's Christian Association present with us today, was founded by the young girls themselves. It was called, "Le Ligue Des Semeuses De Courage"—The League for the Scattering of Courage —and whenever one was doubtful of the outcome of the

war, one of these sowers of courage was pledged to change immediately the conversation to faith in victory and brave fortitude under disaster, and thus was the whole nation enheartened by the young womanhood of France, and the war—who but knows?—may have been won because of the Girl Reserves of France.

A sentence spoken by Joan of Arc, the French patron saint, was the motto of the League:

"Il ne faut pas gemur, il faut agir, c'est tout de suite l'heure de bien faire."
"This is not the time for weeping but for action: this is the immediate hour for high living."

The pioneers who have braved the barriers of the earth's geography have oft been the Couriers who established the permanent camps of civilization, and have been the forerunners of faith, and have established for man better ways of living.

Arnold Guyot years ago established the influence of physical geography on the development of life. The world is divided into two hemispheres: Northern and Southern, North and South American, Europe and Africa, Northern and Southern Asia with Australia. In the South, the vegetation and animal kingdoms are prolific and large, and nature is in magnificent proportions, but there is poor civilization; there is savagery. Too much heat will bring indolence to man; where there is provision of food, he grows idle and effete; where the heights and depths and grandeurs are extreme, he tamely submits to nature as her passive slave. But it is left for the rugged temperate winds to blow, and the harsh winters to fashion, and the desperate rigors of an exacting climate to spur man to fight for his food, to search for shelter, and to wrap his body in garments warm. Thus

the Manchus came from the North and conquered South China, the Turk subdued the Egyptian, the Hun and Goth conquered Rome. "Thou must go without, go without"—that is the everlasting song which every hour all our life through hoarsely sings to us.

Civilization had its early rise in the tropics—Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Mediterranean shores—because of the easy mode of living. There man found food growing in luxuriance and free for his plucking, the shelter of sky was his home and there was no struggle for existence. But the infinitesimal world of malaria germs and typhus and sleeping sickness drove man to establish his fortresses of civilization in the North Temperate Zone. Who knows but that the exodus to Florida and California, with their semi-tropical charms, with science subduing the enemies of man in the carriers of deadly disease, may witness man again seeking his earliest home in the alluring climes of the South?

The Genius of Initiative

The Courier that faces the unknown alone always is entitled to be claimed among the braves of the earth. God's minorities have often been the courageous souls that were the pioneers of a passion, and set out, not knowing the end of their trail. The spirit of the Courier has ever been the spirit that breaks with the past, that pushes into undiscovered countries, whether they be in the realm of exploration or science or religion. The man with initiative is the man who not only dreams but dares and does. He not only sees visions in the quiet of his study, but makes his way to victories on the ridge of the rugged and red splashed trenches. His is the ability to

originate a plan and the nerve to see it through to the end.

Witness Governor Alexander Spottswood in the early days of old Virginia. Fired with an imagination that beyond the Blue Ridge and Appalachian chain of mountains lay another world of surpassing grandeur, he set out with his Knights of the Golden Horseshoe hoping, doubtless, to reach the shores of the Pacific Ocean. They went no further than the charming Valley of Virginia, where amidst great rejoicing they claimed a new realm for their king; but every visitor to the Pan-American Exposition in San Francisco saw the victory of those early pioneers in the glories of a great continental exposition.

And Daniel Boone, Courier of Courage that he was, felled his trees and drained his swamps, and blazed his path from Virginia through Kentucky and then died, but out along the trail, had he waited long enough, the St. Louis Exposition sprung into the glorious pageant of a nation's greatness.

Galileo stands before the council and is commanded to recant his belief that the earth is a moving body, and with courage wavering a moment he finally proclaims with the passion of the pathfinder, *"E puri si muove"*—but it does move all the same.

And Martin Luther, surrounded at Worms by the mighty, holds the conscience of the ages in his hand. They ask him to recant, and flashing truth like a knight courageous he proclaims for generations and generations the emancipation of man's free thinking in religion to the end of time.

One of the last expeditions to reach the summit of Mount Everest failed, but in announcing the loss of the

brave party *The London Times* said, "They were last seen—going strong for the top."

This is the ode to all the Couriers of Courage, sung by Rudyard Kipling:

"There's no use in going further. This is the end of civilization,"
So they said and I believed it, broke my land and sowed my crop,
Built my barns and strung my fences along the little border station
Tucked away below the foothills where the trails run out and stop.

Till a voice as bad as conscience rang interminable changes
On one everlasting Whisper day and night, repeated so
Something hidden. Go and find it. Go and look behind the Ranges,
Something lost behind the Ranges. Lost and waiting for you. Go.

So I went, worn out of patience; never told my nearest neighbor.
Plotted sites of future cities, traced the easy grade between them.

Well, I know who'll get the credit—all the clever ones that followed,
Came a dozen men together—never knew my desert fears;
Tracked by the camps I quitted, used the waterholes I'd hollowed,
They'll go back and do the talking. They'll be called the Pioneers.

God took care to hide that country till He judged His people ready,
Then He chose me for His Whisper, and I've found it and it's yours.
Anybody might have found it, but His Whisper came to me.

Something lost behind the Ranges over yonder. Go you there!

The Dignity of Individuality

Men who have succeeded best have been men who have recognized the dignity of individual personality, and bristling down the years have come those brave saints who dared to believe in the dignity of selfhood.

"Cogito ergo sum"—I consider, therefore I am, is the dictum of Descartes. Not self-conceit, but a consciousness of self; not vanity, but individual estimation.

These pioneer souls have ever asserted their own individuality, sometimes against protests, in the face of the world's laughter at other times, but unafraid, rugged, fervent and true to the truth so far as they saw the light. Emerson has said that "nature arms each man with some faculty which enables him to do easily some feat impossible to any other man." "How true is this," says Anna Robinson Brown in *What Is Worth While.* "In all the universe of God there are no two souls alike. Each human soul can say, 'I am unique.' In all the worlds and worlds, in all the ages and ages, there never has been one like me, and in all time there never shall be again. I have no double."

Methodists stand out in their glorious challenge to the Christian world to base their faith upon a fundamental experience of grace; Presbyterians inspire men to a program based on the sovereignty of God; the Episcopalian is individual in the emphasis upon the solidarity of the church; Lutheranism asks for the main emphasis to be laid on the doctrine of justification by faith; and the Baptists hold to their distinctive doctrine of the competency of the soul in matters of conscience and religion. But with each distinctly separate as the fingers of the hand; when the aggressive call for a united Christendom is heard, they fold their individualities like fingers behind their palms and strike with powerful fists the gates of hell, and the gates go crumbling down.

I was walking through the cemetery of Le Mans in France, in April, 1919, and wandered among the graves of the recent dead. Here lay the silent form of WARD-

SLAW SOLKOUSKI. He was a Pole and above his grave stood a cross of wood; and here was KINELEFF BASILE from Siberia, in Russia, with another cross. I read a Belgian name and wrote it down, EUGENE DELVINGE, and France, brave-hearted nation as she was, had marked the grave of RENE DESHAGES, and his weeping sister was tenderly touching his glorious grave; and now I walked to where lay ABDELLAH BOURD, and a crescent, symbol of his Mohammedan faith, was above his grave; and near was another enemy's burial plot, marked ALWIN MULLER, GERMAN SOLDIER, and in the British section were the graves of PRIVATE HARKNESS and PRIVATE MURPHY, and at every grave I lifted my overseas cap and solemnly saluted the dead.

But I came now to the mound of the American soldiers, sleeping in the kindly soil of bleeding France. Here was Harry Fisher, a Y.M.C.A. secretary, dead under the Stars and Stripes, and I forgot that there ever had been a slander against the Y.M.C.A., for he was a martyr to his country's cause and lay sleeping as a brave American under the folds of the American flag. And yonder was the cross of Thelma Eisenfeldt, a Jewess Red Cross nurse, and she, too, was a full one hundred per cent American, asleep under the same beneficent flag.

Then I saw the name of Henry Grant and I saluted a son of the loyal North, and here the grave of Lee Williams, and I was proud to find the grave of a Southern lad.

"Here's to the blue of the windswept North
When they meet on the fields of France,
May the spirit of Grant be over them all
As the sons of the North advance.

"Here's to the gray of the sun-kissed South,
When they meet on the fields of France,
May the spirit of Lee be over them all
As the sons of the South advance.

"Here's to the blue and the gray as one
When they meet on the fields of France,
May the spirit of God be over them all
As the sons of the Flag advance."

And I found the resting place of Joe Smith, a negro, and stood by his soldier's grave, and Joseph Rolvolsky, a son of foreign-born parents, was there; all of them were sleeping in the city of the silent dead, under the blessings of Old Glory's grateful pride, and each of them with as much right, and with as great a price already paid, to be called a one hundred per cent American as any American citizen ever born beneath the privileges of that magnanimous flag. All of them had kept the faith!

Outside of the gates of the cemetery was a marble group of the risen Saviour slaying Satan, the old serpent —the last enemy, death.

"They're lying around, face down on the ground
And they can't hear me sound the great Rally.
But they'll hear it again, but they'll hear it again
With a glad refrain,
When Gabriel sounds the Last Rally."

These soldiers of courage had at last met the mound where individual personalities sleep together in a unity of faith.

The Challenge of Life's Inequalities

The Couriers calling the world to seek a better land, that is to say, a heavenly one, have recognized the cruel inequalities of life.

The American Declaration of Independence teaches a great truth when it says: "We hold these truths to be

self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." Please, my friends, notice that after the word "equal" there is a semi-colon and not a period, they are equal in certain inalienable rights, among them life, liberty and happiness. But all men do not have these rights. Circumstances mark them as the world's brothers of low degree, to whom Christianity seeks to equitably distribute the blessings of mankind.

A friend of mine had a great interest in a boy of foreign-born parents. She lived in a wonderful house just outside of Boston. Money was abundant and she had a heart as big as a mother's—and she had adopted this boy for what she could do for him.

He spent a Saturday afternoon in her steam-heated house. It was like a fairyland to the poor hungry lad of the tenements. Everybody was out at their sports on this Saturday and Pedro had a wonderful time.

And the time came to go. And the little boy of mixed European stock prepared to make his way by the suburban trains home; when into the house rushed my friend's two boys, lugging a sled and swinging a pair of skates. And they met Pedro as regular gentlemen would, and Pedro left. But before the final word of good-bye, he said to his hostess:

"Gee, but ain't your boys got a chanct!"

Well, didn't they have? A home, money, friends, sports, a school, parents, food, doctors, and warm clothes.

That's why Christianity, with its social agencies, takes its place in the homes of the poor. They know. They understand. They make homes, they furnish sports, they send doctors, and all we have to do is give the

money. And little enough of that! Our challenge is to right the inequalities of life.

Mrs. F. Howard Taylor told us in a student conference of one of the world's inequalities:

"I shall never forget coming home one night after a day's evangelistic work in the country with a heavy heart, because I had seen tragedies that I cannot tell you of now. For four days I could not speak; I felt as if I could never smile again. We passed under a little archway over the road and one of my women said to me, 'There's a nun who lives in there.' There was a little temple on one part of that arch. 'Would you like to go in and speak to her?' I said, 'Yes, let us go in.' We went through a little tumble-down doorway under the arch into a damp, dark place. 'There is the little room she lives in,' exclaimed my companion. We crossed the tiny courtyard, and went into a little low room. It was so dark and dreary and dismal inside. 'Perhaps the nun is up in the temple,' my companion said. We went up the winding steps, and there was a little temple with three hideous idols looking down the road, supposed to be watching the passers-by. The dust was lying thick and leaves had blown in. No footsteps were to be seen anywhere and my woman said, 'She must be out. Let us go now.' And sick at heart with the faces of those idols and the lonely dreariness of that little spot, we went down the stone steps again, and I looked into that room and thought of that woman's life. A couple of boys came in, and we said, 'Where's the nun?' They replied, 'Don't you know? She lived here all her life and got old and she couldn't go out to beg any more, and she got sick and no one thought anything about her and she died. She starved to death. She was buried

and that's the end of her.' They laughed to see our faces and walked out. I stood in the gathering shadows that night, and looked into that dismal little room and up those winding steps and thought of what the life of that woman meant. I suppose that for fifty years she had lived there, had gone up and down those little steps every day, had worshiped those hideous idols, had burned incense, had prayed her meaningless prayers with that insatiable hunger and thirst in her soul all the time for something that never came into her life; and she got old and lay down there alone to die and went out into the dark."

The Couriers of the Cross will find some day the better land they seek, in the broken, blue-lighted daybreak of an ageless morning when they shall have found their heavenly home and shared in the circle of saints redeemed from the happy races of men.

II

THE NEW DEMOCRACY

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THE NEW DEMOCRACY

John 19: 19: Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews.

Christianity is the new democracy. It was ushered in by the death of the King on a Cross, for Jesus on the Cross identified himself with mankind, and by the spiritual dynamic in that death, he imparted to human beings for the first time the capacity to govern themselves. The disciples of Jesus since his death on the Cross have constituted the world's new demoracy.

The old democracy was Greek and heathen, and its spiritual fibre was unable to withstand the blight of prosperity that comes with successful rule; and it failed. The new democracy has a divine life and the "poor in spirit," the "light of the world," "and the salt of the earth," have a resident dynamic within the souls of its individuals. The perpetual success of the new democracy is assured because it carries within itself the power of creating a higher life.

We may never expect to realize a universal brotherhood of man until there are enough individuals to constitute a new creation with power given them from heaven sufficient, first, to govern themselves, and then they to govern other people. A pure democracy is the rule of a people who first know how to govern themselves. This is the only new democracy that carries hope to all the world!

His death was the death of God, and by his death he made his people a kingdom of priests. "And now unto him who hath loved us and loosed us from our sins in his own blood and hath made us a kingdom and priests unto God his Father be glory and majesty and dominion forever and forever." In his death he made a new creation who since the moment he drooped his head and cried, "It is finished," have put into motion a circumference of influence which has always encompassed civilization in its bounds, and has mapped all political progress since his day.

So Jesus of Nazareth set up a kingdom by sacrifice on the Cross, a new democracy, which really means the rule of God's will on earth. Jesus reigns and rules with a scepter of love, his throne a seat by the side of the road, and his crown, the thorns which all suffering humanity has shared. There are three outstanding utterances of Jesus which set forth the principles by which the knights of the new democracy must govern the world.

1. "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." John 16: 33.
   Meekness is the new power by which the best shall eventually rule.
2. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28: 20.
   The humble Jesus becomes available at the call of a broken humanity.
3. "I am among you as he that serveth." Luke 22: 27.
   The democracy of the Cross ushers into the world the principle that the greatest men serve like the lowliest.

Meekness Marks the New Democracy

"Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

The old democracy was the vehicle of the demagogue who drove an unenlightened peasant to do his will. The new democracy is built upon a brotherhood where meekness seeks to inherit the earth. "There have been leaders

of the people who flattered them but never loved them at all," said Coriolanus, but Jesus loved the plain man of the new democracy and never flattered him.

The old democracy sought to inflame the ignorant people with the hatred of war against their fellow man and, outside of actual Christianity, mankind has always been thirsty for blood. But the call of the new democracy is for a hatred of war, and Jesus bade his disciples to sheathe their sword. Christianity seeks the new democracy of a world brotherhood by outlawing war.

The old democracy flourished with slaves and the strong drink traffic and illiteracy and the suppression of woman; Christianity has freed the slave, is strangling the drink traffic, is enlightening the mind of the people, and has emancipated woman.

The old democracy sought greatness with grandeur and glory; the new democracy seeks to rule with gentleness and goodness.

Never other than a carpenter driving his honest nails was Jesus, yet those symphonies in stone built by Michael Angelo Buonarroti and Leonardo da Vinci and Sir Christopher Wren were inspired in their grandeurs by the humble Nazarene. Never a line traced upon a record lasting even the length of a day did Jesus draw, yet the graceful Madonnas of Raphael, the rich colors of Murillo and the living canvasses of Rubens drew their greatness out of this humble charm.

The plumber who, by the skill of his trade, drains the nocuous gasses from the sleeping room of little children; the housewife washing dishes and polishing floors with a song, are the knights of the meek and lowly Nazarene. His democracy is the democracy of work and toil and lowly labor.

A few years ago, Herbert Hoover had spoken to the Bible class of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and at the close of his address the class insisted that they be allowed to make an offering of fifty-eight thousand dollars for the Near East Relief, and then Mr. Hoover announced that the teacher of the class had asked the privilege of laying on the plate a check for a million dollars, and when called upon for a few words Mr. Rockefellor said: "I do not envy my father his money, I have enough myself to satisfy me. I do not envy my father his children, I have as fine a family as he has, nor do I envy him his wife, for she is my mother and my own wife is as fine as his; but I do envy my father one great gift of God, the gift of coming to fortune and success by the toil of his own hands, the sweat of his own brow, and the opportunity of coming out of poverty to achievement and plenty by laboring as others have wrought."

Nietzsche sneered at Jesus because he had given humanity a slave religion, he ridiculed the meek because he cried, "Your yielding is your soil!" but the superhuman of the Hohenzollerns has been beaten back to exile in the castle at Doorn by the fervent and childlike prayers of the gentle generalissimo of the Allied Army, Marshal Ferdinand Foch. Following the German devastation of the Cathedral at Louvain, hundreds of orphan children had their daily meals served in those ruins by the Red Cross Society of Belgium. The opening of each meal was preceded by the recital of the Lord's Prayer, which was interrupted at each midday when these lines were repeated:

"Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

The children could not be persuaded or coaxed into repeating the last line—"As we forgive those who trespass against us"; until one day when all eyes were closed a great baritone voice in the door of the cathedral finished the phrase—"as we forgive those who trespass against us," and still repeating the words, he walked into the midst of the kneeling children and they opened their eyes to behold their king; Albert of Belgium, gentle, forgiving, meek, reconciling, had on behalf of his rebellious subjects taught the new generation the democracy of the cross. The rule of the meek is henceforth the power that shall inherit the earth. This is the democracy of the cross.

The King Identifies Himself with the Subjects of the New Democracy

"Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world."

Gentle kings in fairyland and in pages of living history have walked and talked with their identity screened from their mingling subjects, sometimes to surprise, sometimes to bless, sometimes to learn, and Jesus becomes the King in humble incognito on the Cross; shrouded in a sheen of glory he takes his place among men in his death so low that the humblest of humans may reach him; if a murderer calls on his name, he has died like one of them; if a thief begs his mercy, he is near at hand; if saints need him, they surround his cross; and if a conscience-stricken centurion cries, "Surely this is a righteous man," Jesus becomes the Captain of his salvation.

And what shall we say of this unique, this catholic, this universal man? Born in mystery, reared in obscurity, suddenly come to perfect bloom as quietly as had

the purple lilies of his own Syrian fields. We cannot think of him as any man, but as the man head and shoulders above every man. Among physicians, the Great Physician, among the teachers the best, among the well-born—of heavenly birth. His was the virile poise of a great man, and his the purity and the tenderness of the heart of a mother. He was a peasant born in the corn crib of cattle with the blood of harlots and murderers in his veins, yet, with it all, he was royal in his lineage and princely before the courts of kings. Before a king who demanded a sign he was majestic in quiet scorn, when in defense of a fallen woman he was as humble in his gentle strength as though he had been the penitent himself. He was born a Jew, but lived as a citizen of every country and a fellow of every race. He caused a wise teacher to blush away the shame of his little learning while "so true was his mind to the universal rudiments of common thought" that the common crowds thronged to hear him gladly. If men have sorrow, so had he. If they are filled with joy, so was he. His heart is tuned to tears, vibrant to victory, and is ever changeful to the charm and crises of humanity's weal and woes wherever he is called upon to be the friend of man.

Yet, how strange a thing it is that men for whom he lived and loved and longed more than he loved his own life, put him to death. Persecuted insanely, outraged in judgment, hunted and harassed, sought and clamoured for, he was led out to die like the meanest derelicts of the moral world, upon a cross. And yet out from that cross there go those salutary influences for the redemption of our race.

All men are beginning to understand this new democracy. And the world will never understand him fully

until all the races of men combine to interpret this raceless, creedless, timeless man. Not until the Negro with his rich emotion and melody of song; the Red Man with his clean integrity of life and stoical calm under deepest grief; not until the Brown and Yellow Races sounding the deeps of the mystical philosophies of life combining a childlike faith—not until all of them shall lay their hands into the practical handclasp of their Caucasian brother in universal kinship shall the world interpret best—

"The catholic man who has mightily won God out of knowledge,
And good out of infinite pain, and sight out of blindness, and purity out of a stain."

Jesus makes himself available to the common crowds of men by his gift of himself on the Cross. He identifies himself with the disciples of the new democracy.

I am for Bill Jones, Tom Brown, and John Smith, just the common folks. I love to walk beside him when he puts his hand to the plough, and cheer his donkey on to the end of the row. I am for him when he stands at the pay window on Saturday night and waits his turn for wages. I love to see him wrap his big hands about the bills, thrust them into his pockets, and go off whistling and walking on the air.

I am for him when he and his wife stand beside the new grave of their first-born boy, just buried in the fresh-broken bosom of the only plot of ground that they can call their own on the top side of the earth. I am for them with their red neckties, and yellow shoes, wool hats and cotton socks and gingham dresses, with their cat-licked hair, and shining noses; but with their handsome faces made in the image of God—I am for folks.

I am for folks when they have lost all of their money, and come to me and bury their heads in my lap while I tell them that being good is better than having gold, and knowing the will of God is better than wealth; that riches consist not in what we have, but in what we are—I am for folks. I am for them when they say, "I seen," "I have saw," "him and I," "them are," and "busted" and "knowed," and "growed," for I know that in the perfect language of the soul they speak a tongue the angels understand. I am for them when Hannah Johnson and Tom Brown and Mary White gather about the family organ, and out in the home among the hills, on Sunday afternoons sing, "There's a land that is fairer than day, and by faith we can see it afar." I am for them when they brag on their children. I listen to their little daughter play for me her graduation piece, and though she makes an hundred errors and discords, I hear the parent say, always the same, "Our daughter has talent, and the professor tells us that we must send her to the conservatory." Send her on. God bless her budding genius!

I am for them when they ride with a whole family over miles of rough, red roads to the baptismal day. I love to see them push their new, squeaking shoes in the soft mud at the edge of the creek, and faces shining with a heavenly light, sing through their tears, "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand, and cast a wistful eye to Canaan's fair and happy land where my possessions lie," and see the preacher bury their ten-year-old son in the waters of baptism.

I am for them when they stand about the bedside of their dying mother, and without pretense of suppressing their sobs and sighs, they wipe away the tears from their eyes till eyes and nose are aflame, red like living fire;

but when their mother is gone, they go out under the oaks and cedars of the grove about the house and in a hallowed moment, alone with God, each son and daughter thank him for giving to them such a dear, sweet mother for so long a time in their humble home. I am for folks with their faith in God; and a real desire to help bear the burdens of a bowed humanity. I love them for their friendliness and laughter and simplicity, for their hope of heaven, and for their unceasing yearning every day to sometime wear the crown laid up for them in the City of the skies. I am for folks! God bless them all!

If a missionary needs him midst a howling mob, Jesus is immediately available and his crusaders go out with the assurance—

"Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world."

Major Vivian Gilbert in *The Romance of the Last Crusade* has told us a charming story of the capture of Jerusalem. He tells of the advance on the city when the British had occupied the traditional site of the house where Jesus appeared to his disciples at Emmaus. A monastery battered by a Turkish barrage sheltered the wounded soldiers. He learned in the late afternoon that one of his men was desperately torn with a shell and he went into the gloomy room where he lay, now half asleep in his grey army shirt. His uniform had been taken away. He would not need that again. And the major, an actor in New York City when the war broke out, says: "I sat beside his cot upon an old cartridge box and he lifted his wounded hand, attempting a salute. He wanted his mother, for he was only nineteen, and had pushed his age three years ahead to enlist at all. I told

him the story of Jesus having come into that very room and how that his face did shine as he made himself available to his troubled disciples in their loneliness. And the strained look had vanished; a peaceful, almost happy and contented expression had taken the place. I took his hand in both of mine and he said, 'Thank you for telling me that story, sir. "Abide with me, fast falls the eventide" is mother's favorite hymn. I shall be able to sleep now. Good-night, sir.' " The setting sun had caused it to become cooler now, and tucking the covers about his lad, the major left him in quiet sleep—Jesus Christ had come in again to the same room at Emmaus and had taken the place of the suffering soldier's mother. The Cross and the risen Christ had lifted the veil of the King walking unseen among the desolations and tears of a terrible war.

The Greatest Serve Best

"I am among you as he that serveth."

The Cross has created a new democracy which witnesses the King dying for his kingdom; it beholds divinity forever robbing the lowliest service of all its shame. Henceforth, he belongs to the new democracy, who dignifies a simple deed with the knighthood of serving man; who blesses by bleeding; lifts by loving; grows strong by stooping; finds his life while losing his life; saves by scattering; becomes useful by yielding; and works with his might what his hands find to do.

The calamity that seizes upon us in our lower levels is the hatred of work. The only person in all the world who hates housework is a housewife, a chauffeur is the only man who hates to drive a car, and the one person who dislikes the work of the pastor is the pastor himself.

The new day calls for the joy of work, the ecstacy of loving to do the job from which we draw our living. There is rising a new peril in our day of beautiful sentiments. We are joyous in rendering smaller service for which we get no pay; while we sometimes fail to do well the work of our profession or calling in life, which is our first duty to men. The really great man never thinks of himself as too good to do his part in the world's work; who even humble enough to stoop, helps his weaker fellow, and who even though he be a possessor of wealth, goes daily about his task to win the wages along with other men who toil.

Susan Rice has a beautiful poem on washing dishes:

"Once I washed my dishes with my face to the wall
Standing before a dingy iron sink,
My heart hot with anger against my fate;
I thought I was made for better things than housework.
So I raged and consumed myself with bitterness,
Until, one day, I turned around,
And washing my dishes on a table facing a window,
Perched on a high stool like a clerk,
I looked over a meadow white with daisies.
(The farmers say daisies mean poor land),
But to me the field was beautiful,
Dotted with daisies and bright green weeds,
Glinting in the sun like sword blades,
I feast my eyes upon them,
While I wash my plates and cups.

"I watch the long road that goes over the hill
While my hands are in the soapsuds.
Automobiles rush along the road,
Driven by people bent on pleasure,
Or going to face death in hospitals,
Doctors on errands of mercy and healing,
Business men meeting appointments,
While I sit on a stool before the kitchen table
Washing my dishes, and my thoughts rove over the world and beyond,
To the land of the unreturning—
For the crossroad goes to the cemetery
Where the one dearest to me lies asleep.

"I look at the bounteous sky,
The hollyhocks by the fence, red and yellow,
The gracious trees dotting the landscape.
There is so much beauty in the world
My heart overflows with gratitude,
As I wash my dishes."

He who drives a nail at his carpenter's trade worships God in the new democracy quite as much as a parson who drives home a truth. Reality in religion is the cry of a man who sells his wares in the market place quite as much as in the chorister who sings his hymns. Reality in religion is found in the artist who paints a landscape picture quite as much as in the man who covers his soul with the beauty of holiness; in the apron of a housewife, as truly as in the cap of a cardinal; in the open spaces as in the altars of the church; in actual industries as really as in the idealities. Real Christianity is unaffected as the breathing of a healthy man.

William Booth, great democrat in religion, went to the slums and the streets to preach his gospel of the new democracy. He was brought before a council of his Wesleyan church and urged to cease his activities in evangelizing the outcasts of society. He waited for a moment, so his daughter tells, undecided, and glancing to the gallery in the church caught the eye of his wife, and she immediately cried out, "Never, never, never," and walking out arm in arm those two leaders of the Salvation Army put again in practice the greatest movement for democracy the Church of Christ has witnessed.

Professor Lecky, great Irish historian, says that the preaching of John Wesley meant more to the English people than the victories of Nelson at Trafalgar and Wellington at Waterloo.

And what is the meaning of the Cross to those who are to be heralds of the King? Ours is to be the glad

acclaim of those arrayed in robes of white, washed in the blood of the Lamb, preparing the way and making a highway for the kingdom of service to men. Never a nobler and truer interpretation of the democracy of the Cross will come to us than the religion of serving broken, blighted, wounded, wasted, ravaged humanity.

I charge you also to get a glimpse of the sinning world that came to William Booth. Begging his church to locate him in a mission in the London slums, and being refused, he came home late on a night and waking his wife, Catherine, he broke into tears and exclaimed, "Catherine, wake up, I have been to hell. I saw the mud and mire of the streets of London cluttered with the refuse of humanity. You and Evangeline and Ballington must help me to lift them up to God."

And when Booth died there was an Army girdling the globe, marching into the slums of all the earth, substituting the blood-marked cross of Christ for the red flaming lights of the underworld. When the Duke of Wellington died they made a great chariot of iron, which, as I looked upon it, the guide told me was so heavy it broke through the sewers of London during the funeral of the Duke. When General William Booth passed along those same streets a million weeping eyes of those he had helped let fall their tears along the way of the funeral march. And when William Booth awaked in the other world, I had rather a thousand times behold the army of saints washed clean in Jesus' blood which he saw, than to behold the sight that will greet the Iron Duke of Wellington on the day of resurrection when the broken, torn bodies of Englishmen and Frenchmen shall rise out of the wheat field and sunken ditch of the battleground at Waterloo.

Vaschel Lindsay has described it thus:

"Booth led boldly with his big bass drum—
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)
The saints smiled gravely, and they said, 'He's come.'
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)
Walking lepers followed, rank on rank,
Lurching bravoes from the ditches dank,
(Banjos)
Every slum had sent its half-a-score
The round world over—Booth had groaned for more.
Every banner that the wide world flies
Bloomed with glory and transcendent dyes.
Big-voiced lassies made their banjos bang!

"Tranced, fanatical, they shrieked and sang,
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)
(Bass drums)
Booth died blind, and still by faith he trod,
Eyes still dazzled by the ways of God.
Booth led boldly and he looked the chief:
Eagle countenance in sharp relief,
Beard a-flying, air of high command
Unabated in that Holy Land.
Jesus came out from the court-house door,
Stretched his hand above the passing poor.
(Flutes)
Booth saw not, but led his queer ones there
Round and round the mighty Court-House Square.
Yet in an instant all that blear review
Marched on spotless, clad in raiment new.
The lame were straightened, withered limbs uncurled
And blind eyes opened on a new, sweet world.

"Sages and sibyls now and athletes clean,
Rulers of empires, and of forests green!
—O, shout Salvation! It was good to see
Kings and princes by the Lamb set free.
The banjos rattled and the tambourines
Jing-jing-jingled in the hands of the queens!
And when Booth halted by the curb for prayer
He saw his Master through the flag-filled air.
Christ came gently with a robe and crown
For Booth, the soldier, while the throng knelt down.
He saw King Jesus—they were face to face!
And he knelt a-weeping in that holy place!
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)

III

YOUTH—AND THE HIDDEN HICKORY

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Exodus 4: 2: What is that in thy hand? And he said, A rod.
Exodus 7: 17: In this thou shalt know that I am the Eternal One: behold I will smite with the rod.

The new democracy's only hope lies in the new generation. Voltaire once said, "The last Christian died on a cross." Certainly the older generation has never taken the teachings of Jesus seriously enough either to inherit the earth by meekness or to build even a brotherhood without war.

We came from France on the Holland steamship *Rotterdam,* and with a Texas regiment. The officer in charge issued an order in mid-ocean for all the army to discard their Sam Browne belts. I can never forget the comedy of the transformation. Round shoulders, and flat chests, and ugly shoulder blades, and stooping forms were emphasized tenfold by the absence of the smart Sam Browne belt that greatly aided the beauty of the military smartness.

But the philosophy of the Sam Browne belt is the philosophy of the new generation. The sign of army discipline—the insignia that distinguished the private from his superior in rank—could be thrown off in less than five seconds, and the psychology of the situation crystallized in almost as short a time as that required in removing the Sam Browne belt.

"Actual authority is only assumed, like a Sam Browne belt, and may as easily be set aside," argued the drug clerk of the former Texas policeman, who happened to be an officer. Henceforth they were to resume the respective former positions in their little Texas town and authority could be imposed—and, indeed, disregarded at will.

So the young generation has thrown off the restraints of law, but they have confused restraint with authority. Restraint may be external, but authority is constituent and eternal, and is inwrought in the fundamental relationships of life.

The hidden hickory still exists, and because parents have discarded the woodshed and the hickory is no proof that occasion may not again require its wielding.

The hardy oak had about driven out the less vigorous pine from the northern Michigan Black River Ranch district. And then came a forest fire to sweep the sixty-five thousand acres of timber with almost complete ruin—burned to the ground. Afterwards there sprung up the Jack pine, which is a better species of timber, and it has survived the great conflagration.

And the war came and crumbled and twisted the granite and steel foundations of society's structure, and a new generation is rising—better, more vigorous, greater, more hopeful for the day of the new democracy than the generation destroyed by war!

The Reaffirmation of the Note of Authority

Moses brought the hidden hickory into court and reaffirmed the authority of the God of Israel the eternal. Jehovah never plans to strike with his rod before first asserting his right to the rod. Bishop Butler asserts,

"There is a superior principle of reflection in every man, —a conscience, which pronounces determinately some actions to be in themselves evil, wrong, or just, and without being consulted, this principle magisterially condemns or approves the doer of certain things."

The eternal is the one tested authority of man's universal conscience. Professor Lecky insists that man is a law unto himself, because he is conscious of a law imposed by the infinite Spirit upon his soul, the infinite's right to rule the finite. Whenever this practical philosophy is given expression by the Christian teaching of the divine spirit of its new life in the soul of man—then the new democracy will have won the right and the capacity to inherit the earth.

The water become blood, the pest of gnats, the plague among the cattle, the darkness, thick enough to be felt, at last brought Pharaoh to recognize the authority of the Eternal's rod. But the stubborn Menephtha followed fleeing Israel to the brink of the Red Sea, and doubtless gazed from a vantage point at his engulfed army, tumbling in the waters, rolling his chariots and warriors into cruel death at the bottom of the resurging sea. And it requires but small imagination to hear him say, beating his breast in hopeless defeat, "Yes, Jehovah is the Eternal One, his authority encompasses the land and the sea. His hidden rod has struck."

Whytehead sings in his "Second Day of Creation."

"I gaze aloof at the tissued roof,
Where time and space are the warp and woof
Which the King of kings, like a curtain flings
O'er the dreadfulness of eternal things.

"But if I could see as in truth they be
The glories that encircle me,
I should lightly hold this tissued fold
With its marvelous curtain of blue and gold.

"For soon the whole, like a parched scroll
Shall before my amazed eyes uproll,
And without a screen, at one burst be seen
The Presence in which I have always been."

Lindbergh and Harsh, what extremes of modern youth! Lindbergh crossing the sea by pluck; Harsh murdering the Atlanta drug clerk for luck!

The best of youth follows with reverent recognition of the Eternal ideal; the unrestrained modern youth stumbles through life with blind impulse: the best of youth is trying to get up in the world; unleashed youth is trying to get by in the world: the good are showing their skill; the worst are seeking a thrill: the good youth are endeavoring zealously to achieve; the bad to deceive.

Youth at its best accepts the tested authority of the Eternal; youth, restive, seeks experience, even if it defies authority. The *New York Times* of December 12, 1928, tells of three girls, who in defiance of the physician's authority kissed their sick companion in order to catch the influenza and get a week out of Glenn Ridge School in New Jersey. But the next few days revealed that the scarlet fever germ puts authority before experience, and the new generation groaned their pitiful groans! A young lad in an orphanage was restrained from climbing the steel tower carrying the power wires. But he threw off the restraint and a live wire touched his head to assert its relentless authority, and he was killed immediately.

"Yes," shouted a late returning drunken youth at his old-fashioned mother, warning him from her bedroom window of the burning light, "I will be careful of the candle and will not set fire to the house. In fact, there are two lights, and to show you I know more about it than you do, I will blow out one of the lights and still

find my way to bed." And he blew. But there was but one light in spite of all his self-assertion, and his darkness was so extreme!

"Give me gangway, my throttle is wide open," is the cry of license; "I have learned, therefore, I can do all things through Christ who empowereth me," is the assurance of the decent generation who knows the elemental truth of the hidden hickory.

Youth fails chiefly because of what they do not know. Life calls for adjustments by the young, life needs improvement by the young, life insists that its properly authorized standards be considered by the young.

Modern Substitutes for the Hickory Have Failed

We have been in search of a democracy that was able to rule itself; but thus far there is no hope except in the democracy of the twice-born with a revenue from heaven. Modern substitutes for the sovereignty of God, for the note of the authority of the Eternal, for the majestic disciplines of life have all of them been failures.

We were sitting on the spacious veranda of a Cairo hotel with a mendicant sleight-of-hand Arab showing his clever tricks. He had a young woman in our party to fold her hand about two copper pieces and one silver, and, behold, before our very eyes the silver piece had vanished. He drew a live serpent from our pockets. He was clever with the old Egyptian astrologer's and soothsayer's tricks, but he was only a fake. He did not possess any authority or natural laws. He could not produce something out of nothing. He was a very poor, wandering, smart sleight-of-hand entertainer, a failure indeed as great as were the tricksters who tried their substitutes for Moses' rod of hickory. Back of Moses'

rod was omnipotence. Back of theirs was desperate make-believe.

A popular form of kindergarten teaching has tried to instruct the young generation to discard the shall-nots of the Ten Commandments. "Life follows the positive channels of personality," they say. "Take off the reins of restraint in childhood. Direct the positive." And here they come twenty-five years after with a cut-down runabout piled five high in two seats, with cut-out and self-expression rampant. They have not learned to steer an automobile, much less themselves.

Colleges have cried, "Follow your bent. Take the easy road." And education today as a national factor never before was so near to complete failure with leading educators saying, "Half of the students are not fit to be candidates for the discipline of the mind."

Liberal churches have said, "Man is divine," "He is his own god," yet the thundering note of the dogmatist, unwelcome as it is, still holds the conscience and attention of the crowds that carry the power of deciding elections in a democracy.

Parents have spared the rod and spoiled the child in substituting indulgence for parental control. The drama has despoiled every motive for the authority of marriage in the glamour of the stage. War has failed miserably to speak in tones of authority to an intransigent world.

Religion is left utterly alone to rediscover the hidden hickory and affirm again the sovereign right of the Eternal on the conscience and spirit of man.

I know a father who joined with his daughters in defying their mother on the question of smoking, and he bought them ivory and gold and amber cigarette holders, and now, with three or four inveterate tobacco fiends in

his home, he sits up late in the night in a lonely corner of his beautiful home wondering! A good spanking, ten years ago when he taught his family they needed no discipline, would have been a wonder worker in his saddened and disappointed life. I saw a mother and daughter exchanging cigarettes on a lake steamer this summer, and I reveled in the thought that maybe a good spanking administered to that mother fading with age would have done her more good twenty years ago than a man-sized spanking administered today.

David never once displeased his son Adonijah by asking him, "Why hast thou done so?" And Adonijah ravaged his sister because she was beautiful and his father had always let him do what he pleased. A good spanking administered by a strong hand would have saved David the guilt of a family blot on its record. And none the less in our good day. A father who rides with a fair friend secretly upon a lonely road and is suddenly passed by his son in another car with lights a-shining, needs a good spanking by a couple of his sons with an old-time cowhide thrown into the bargain. Certainly, we might as well conclude that all the spankings due in this generation do not belong to the children, a few parents might also get what is rightly theirs!

Robert Louis Stevenson tells the beautiful story of a boat in a wallowing sea, stormbeaten and adrift. The crew and passengers were sent below and the hatches closed tight to keep out the lashing spray. Of course, the physical and indeed the moral atmosphere soon was heavy and unhealthy as the crowded cabin swarmed with life. One man sought to escape through a small window for a breath of air. He staggered along the rail, keeping his feet against the hurtling storm. But he made

his way to the aft of the ship and saw the pilot with his hands on the wheel, and when he looked on the pilot's face, the pilot smiled. Quickly he made his way back to his demoralized fellows and told them the smiling, confident pilot held the storm and ship under his hand, and soon they would be safely in port.

The sovereign Christ stands serene as the Pilot—unperturbed with a sense of the infinite right to rule and control and steer, and the shipmates take courage that the harbor is near and smooth waters lie further on!

Unchanging Love Wields the Rod at Last

The hidden hickory opened the beneficent waters of the friendly Red Sea. The Eternal Power behind the rod had given a cloud by day and fire by night. The rod had brought water out of the rock for the thirsty, impatient host, the Eternal had brought quails for meat and manna for food. Love had wielded the hickory over Pharaoh's unyielding heart, and the Eternal watched over Israel while they slumbered and slept. Unchanging love had led with sovereign care.

You know the story of Ben Hur, as told by Lew Wallace. Ben Hur was a Jewish galley-slave, chained to the seat of his trireme, and as he kept time with his huge oar to the beating of the mallet of the ship's master, he was learning his first great lesson in the discipline of life.

He went from his galley-seat to the great chariot race. The arena is filled with eager eyes watching the Roman and the Jew and the Corinthian and the Byzantine swing into the course. As the Jew takes the lead, his hated Roman rival, Messala, swings his chariot close to the fleeting cart of Ben Hur and hurling his long lash he strikes the quivering flesh of Ben Hur's horses with

his stinging whip. These horses, which never before knew anything but a caressing hand, under the harsh lash of the Roman leap into a frightened frenzy.

Ben Hur, wrapping the reins about his strong arms, begins to talk to them as to one of his own beloved. "Be quiet, my children; can you not hear them singing to you from the black tents of your desert home, can you not feel the warm hands of desert boys stroking your frightened faces, and mother comes with white sugar in her hands and bids you eat?" Then, having quieted his horses with a wonderful self-control, he swings them back into the course again. With burst of speed he gives rein to his flying steeds, and under his controlling hands he sweeps them closer and closer to the spokes of Messala's chariot-wheels, striking them with his iron-shod axle, and the Roman with his wounded horses tumbles headlong into the disastrous wreckage; the Corinthian closely follows and the Byzantine, too, falls into the tangle and despairing debris. Now Ben Hur gives to his horses a free rein and urges them on, speaking to them gently, crying, "On Antares, on Rigel; they are crying victory to you at the end of the course, on! on! on!" And Ben Hur sweeps across the goal the winner.

"Where," asks Lew Wallace, "did Ben Hur get the strength to control his great horses at this terrible crisis?" He gathered his strength under the discipline of the galley days. For what is the lurching of a chariot to the wild beating of the sea-waves in a storm, and what is the pulling of the horses' bits compared to the currents of the restless sea? In the earlier days of discipline Ben Hur had trained himself for the larger days of opportunities which might lie before him. The strength of love had wielded its sway and the authority of the master

hand had brought into play the demoralized forces of his frightened team.

"God's in his heaven
And all's right with the world."

IV

SAINT PETER—LIVING-STONE—CARVED OUT OF THE QUARRY

IV

SAINT PETER—LIVING-STONE—CARVED OUT OF THE QUARRY

Matthew 16: 18: Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build.
1 Peter 2: 5: Thou shalt become like living stones, and be built into a spiritual house.

Once on a beautiful summer's day I spent an hour gazing on one of the world's most captivating pieces of marble. It was the statue of David by Michael Angelo. Youth, glorious, sublime, graceful, shines out of that face with all the power which afterwards matured in David, the Shepherd King of Israel.

But once in front of the church of Santa Maria Novella, an ill-shapened, irregular block of marble had lain abandoned, marred and rejected; ruined with unskilled hands that had failed. A worthless stone from Caraca's quarry, and then it fell into the hands of the master Angelo by official commission to do with it what he could; and for eighteen months, shut in a rude shack of wood built about the stone, he chiseled and shaped and cut and formed and re-made this statue of David—a living-stone out of the ugly, discarded stone of the quarry.

And Jesus one time saw a stone rugged and rough and unhewn, and he touched it with swift strokes of hammer and chisel, and Saint Peter, the Living-stone, leaped out of his transforming hands. Jesus found him a stone and made him a saint. The bronze-faced fisherman, dis-

heveled by the wind blown from Galilee, was changed by the gentle touch of Christ into the keeper of the keys of heaven and earth.

I love Saint Peter, because he is the only saint without a halo. He was always losing his. No halo was ever made which would fit well on his very human head. Wherever you find him, you find him stumbling,—but always stumbling to sainthood. He is never seen in any picture else he is mending something he has broken, or he is making over his shattered idols. He often staggers, but he always staggers to a scepter. He is sifted by Satan and tossed high in the winnowing winds, but he always falls back in the everlasting arms of Christ's forgiveness.

Simon means flat-nosed, but Jesus made the flat-nosed Simon the fisherman into Peter the disciple, forgiven seventy times seventy times. Out of the quarry rough and scarred, Jesus cut Simon Peter, swearing, swaggering, impulsive, eager, the strident leader in all mischief and sin, but all the time a teeming magnificence was showing above the thin surface of the native rock; but in the end crucified, transformed through suffering, martyr and saint, Peter became the Living-stone thrilled by the breath of eternal life, softened into a tender heart, gone home to a crown, and a robe and a scepter and a throne, affectionately enshrined in all of Christendom's heart as Saint Peter, the keeper of the gates.

"I wish there were some wonderful place
Called the Land of Beginning Again,
Where all our mistakes and all our heartaches
And all our poor selfish grief
Could be dropped like a shabby old coat at the door,
And never be put on again.

"We should find all the things we intended to do,
But forgot and remembered too late,
Like praises unspoken and promises broken
. . . . . .
And the ones we misjudged and the ones we grudged
Their moments of victory here
. . . . . .
I wish there were some wonderful place
Called the Land of Beginning Again."

The Broken Nets—And a New Business

The first time we see Peter is by the sea in the early morning mending his fisherman's seine. He starts his discipleship with a broken net. All night he had failed at his trade, and discouraged and beaten, he was mending the broken net, getting ready for a new start—when Jesus called him and he heard his voice. He had doubtless been stirred by the Baptist's sermons at the Jordan and he had confessed his sins,—Peter was always confessing his faults,—but now something new came into his life and he left his fisher's net for Jesus' call to a new business. Henceforth he was to seine humanity's sea as a fisher of men.

Our nets are often broken from our very golden success. We grow jaded with getting rich too quickly, and we stand silent and ready for a voice to call us to be a different kind of disciple for him. The seines break often from hard wear, from the human drag, from the length of years, and we desire a change, and Jesus comes to call us to a new and higher business.

Dwight L. Moody as a lad walked to church with his shoes and stockings in his hands because his widowed mother was very poor. And then he walked to Boston and sold shoes until one day the boss of his business called him into his inner office and confronted him with Christ. So successful was Moody that before he was

twenty-one he had made a hundred thousand dollars selling shoes. His nets broke and Christ called him to a new business and he seined two hemispheres with the net of God's boundless love, and a fisher of men was the new business of the great world evangelist.

Once a banker heard the passing Christ calling to a new business and wearied of the old seat of custom, Matthew found the call of a new business in writing a gospel. And John Wanamaker, the merchant prince of a half century, as superintendent of Bethany Sunday School, made Jesus' business his chief concern above his merchandising. Peter had left his broken nets to find a new business.

A Broken Creed—And a New Vision

The next time we see Simon Peter, we see him with a broken creed and a new vision. Peter always was a hard-shell Baptist. He was a bundle of prejudices. He believed everybody was hopelessly inferior to the Jew. His creed was narrow and intolerant and bigoted until he saw the vision of a sheet let down from heaven, and then he caught a planetary outlook.

It was while he was in Cæsarea Philippi that Jesus asked his disciples, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" And his disciples answered, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elias and others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." But Jesus, pressing the issue, continues, "But whom say ye that I am?" And the impulsive, blundering, alert, volatile Peter blurted out his marvelous confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Peter saw to it that a testimony meeting never lagged when he was present. He was quick on the trigger when a question was fired point-blank at

him. "Yes," replied Jesus, "blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona. That answer was revealed to you from heaven. Thou art a rock, and from henceforth thou shalt be a stone ledge and upon that spiritual substratum of revealed religion I will build my church." "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shalt have been bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall have been loosed in heaven."* The church shall set up the moral and spiritual standards of men from henceforth, but they shall have been decided in heaven and then revealed to the divinely appointed church.

Jesus really said, "Peter, you must break your idol of a nationalistic Jewry, you must get to a raceless, ageless, creedless interpretation of Christianity, if you are to be the first Living-stone of the spiritual church." Peter's vision came when he saw the sheet at Joppa. "I never have eaten anything that is common or unclean," remonstrated the bigoted patriot. "I cannot go to Cornelius, I hate Gentiles." But the voice cried, "Rise, Peter, kill and eat," and Peter found a new world vision of the love of God encompassing the whole of mankind. From now on his narrow creed, all shattered and broken, was enlarged into a world-embracing circumference, and he folded all of mankind to his bosom.

"Dago and Sheeney and Chink,
Greaser and Nigger and Jap,
The Devil invented these terms, I think,
To hurl at each hopeful chap
Who comes so far over the foam
To this land of his heart's desire,
To rear his brood, to build his home,
And to kindle his hearthstone fire.
While the eyes with joy are blurred,
Lo! We make the strong man sink,
And stab the soul with the hateful word,
'Dago, and Sheeney and Chink.'

*Dr. W. Hershey Davis' Translation.

"Dago and Sheeney and Chink,
These are the vipers that swarm
Up from the edge of perdition's brink,
To hurt and dishearten and harm.
O shame! When their Roman forebears walked
Where the feet of Cæsars trod,
O shame! When their Hebrew fathers talked
With Moses and he with God.
These swarthy sons of Japhet and Shem
Gave the goblet of life's sweet drink
To the thirsty world; which now gives them,
'Dago and Sheeney and Chink.'

"Dago and Sheeney and Chink,
Greaser and Nigger and Jap;
From none of them does Jehovah shrink;
He lifted them all to his lap.
And the Christ in his Kingly grace,
When their sad, low sob he hears,
Puts his tender embrace around our race
As he kisses away its tears;
Saying, 'Least of these, I link
Thee to me for whatever may hap;
Dago and Sheeney and Chink,
Greaser and Nigger and Jap.'"

A Broken Heart—And a New Birth

Peter is now outside the court of trial weeping with a broken heart. He had denied ever having known his Lord—but out of it all came forgiveness and a new spirit and the Living-stone.

Jesus had said that one of his disciples should betray him, and Peter was the first to boast of his loyalty to his Master even unto death. But here comes the quick unfolding drama of a collapsing soul. Peter prays and presumes and bristles with pride in the upper room and then in the garden he is the first to fall asleep. Self-satisfaction soon deteriorates into complacency and a careless sleep in the garden, and when comes the crisis of an arrest with the sight of torches and swords, quick temper flashes into a foolish gesture of courage and Peter

cuts off the high priest's servant's ear, and Jesus denounces war and revenge and cruel courage, and rebukes Peter and the old rock still is unchanged, and perhaps he was hurt and resentful to his friend, who publicly had made slighting recognition of his method of showing how brave a disciple he could be. "Put up thy sword," had stung his proud soul and soon he joins the fleeing disciples, and now in the outer court he joins the fleeing and, naively, the woman questioner slips in to tease him to a quick disaster. Peter is stumbling headlong to the brink; he rages and flares and curses and fumes and pitches and lunges into the impossibility and tragedy of a fall, when he cries, "I never knew him,"—and the cock crew and Jesus caught his eyes, and Peter goes out to wrestle with himself and his sin and weeps in the darkness with a broken heart. But comes the resurrection, comes the message to Saint Peter—comes the gentle words of forgiveness from Jesus, and at Pentecost comes the Holy Spirit and power and the new birth, and at last the broken rock has become the Living-stone. Peter has been born again—from above—of the Spirit—heaven had revealed to him his broken heart and given him a new one—henceforth the first lively stone in the imperishable church.

Hear the testimony of the wild-natured Gypsy Smith, born in the open forest, now with the grace of diction on his lips and the grace of God in his heart witnessing to "the new birth" before a crowded house in Baltimore. "Do not, I beseech you, think that this is an old-fashioned theme. I know it is, but it is the only theme. I know it is an old story, but it is the only story. It is not stale, it is not played out, it is not old-fashioned. It is a spring that never runs dry; it is a power, and the only power,

that can break fetters and snap chains, that can open blind eyes and cure wounded lives, that can hush storms and still tempests. It is the power that can lift men from sin and ruin, utter and complete, back again to God."

Robert Browning once said, "I believe in Christianity because it launches its dart point-blank at the head of a lie, teaches original sin and the corruption of man's heart." And J. D. Jones of Bounemouth adds, "The passions that no chain can bind, our Lord, thank God, can chain. He does eradicate from the heart the tiger and the beast. He does quicken into life those who were dead in trespasses and sins—and therein lies the world's hope."

My own testimony in grateful and humble spirit given is, my friends, that I have been born from above! I have been changed like the obscure morning with LIGHT FROM ABOVE into the glory of another triumphant day; changed like the germ in a seed which wooed by the WARMTH FROM ABOVE blooms into the luxuriant loveliness of a full red rose; or like the acorn that having died reaches ABOVE its fibre fingers up through the storm-scarred tree trunk, scattering from its fingertips a foliage of beneficent green; my life has been changed like a spring of water when it leaves its shady sources to seek a broad running stream and is kissed FROM ABOVE by the sun into clouds that fall in the gentle ministry of refreshing the earth; indeed, out from the creeping existence of a single unit of vision in life, I have found that a man can rise on the wings of wisdom GIVEN HIM FROM ABOVE to discover a universe trembling with magnificence and hope. I have really, my friends, been BORN FROM ABOVE!

Peter, changed, was bold in the face of governments and magistrates. He was sure of his triumph now in the face of his former tragic failures. The life of God had shattered the heart of the rock and the new Livingstone had a heavenly citizenship.

"I cannot do it alone,
The waves run fast and high,
And the fogs close chill around,
And the light goes out in the sky;
But I know that we two
Shall win in the end—
Jesus and I.

"Coward and wayward and weak,
I change with the changing sky;
Today so eager and brave,
Tomorrow not caring to try;
But He never gives in,
So we two shall win—
Jesus and I."

A Broken Life—And Mended Ways

They are fishing again! And that is the natural thing to do. Peter is back at his old business, and that is all right. Jesus expects us to *change* our business, not to *leave* it, every time. And the Old Salt's luck was bad. The disciples had toiled all night and taken nothing. And it was after the resurrection of the Saviour—and suddenly to the discouraged disciples appeared Jesus on the lake side. No fish caught, they had told him, and Jesus cried to the discouraged fishers, "Cast your net on the right side of the ship," and Peter had a far-away questioning look in his eyes. Stubborn to the end he nearly rebelled—what does Jesus know about fishing in Galilee? He knows nothing. If Peter can't catch fish here, how foolish for Jesus to tell him how—but he yielded to his Master's way, and the boat soon was filled

with fishes everywhere. Peter's broken life came flashing before his face again, and stumbling and falling through the slippery boat of fish, Peter fell again at Jesus' feet, crying aloud, "Oh, you wonderful man—'love's best love'—'man's best man'—'you lovely friend,'—depart from me—I wanted to mend my broken life for you as a disciple, but this is too much. This catch of fish makes you so amazing, so sinless, and I am so worthless and bad. John and James and Andrew will be your servants henceforth, but farewell, Master, 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man,'" and I fancy he sobbed like a contrite child.

And Jesus Mends His Heart—And Peter Mends His Ways

The day comes when Jesus goes away and Peter comes to the leadership among the apostles and the church. Miracles leap out of his hand, heaven is revealed in the very footstep of the old fisherman of Bethsaida, as he seines in the Sea of Life. His broken idols are gone forever now and a glimpse of the cross is his light along the mended way. The old rock from the quarry is the Living-stone with a heart of fire.

And the day comes when Saint Peter, driven hither and beyond by his new passion for his ascended Saviour, comes to Rome—so says the legend of *Quo Vadis*—and in the obscure night under the persecution raging in Rome he flees the second time from Jesus, surrounded by enemies who could destroy him, when,

> "Lo, on the darkness brake a wandering ray,
> A vision flashed along the Appian Way;
> A haggard face, disheveled, frail and worn,
> A king of David's lineage crowned with thorn.

"'Lord, whither farest?' Peter wondering cried.
'To Rome,' said Christ, 'to be re-crucified.'
Into the night the vision ebbed like a breath,
And Peter turned and rushed into Rome and death."

But tradition says that Peter was crucified head downward, so unwilling was he to die as Jesus, with head erect, and so the old saint ascended into the hands of angel bands, they gently bore him on "snowy wings to his eternal home."

The rough old stone, beaten, broken, ruined, stained, marred, shattered by the harsh hand of Satan, had at last been hewn out of the quarry and now changed, softened, transformed, a Living-stone, immortal; Saint Peter is borne by the angel band beyond the pathless circuits of the flaming planets, over the radiant highways of light streaming from the farthest stars, through the open gates of pearl to his throne. Saint Peter, the Living-stone, had been summoned home!

"I owned a little boat a while ago
And sailed a morning sea without a fear,
And whither any breeze might fairly blow
I'd steer the little craft afar or near.
Mine was the boat,
And mine the air,
And mine the sea,
Not mine, a care.

"One day there passed along the silent shore,
While I my net was casting in the sea,
A man, who spoke as never man before;
I followed Him,—new life began in me.
Mine was the boat,
But His the voice,
And His the call,
Yet mine the choice.

"Once from His boat He taught the curious throng,
Then bade me let down nets out in the sea,
I murmured, but obeyed, nor was it long
Before the catch amazed and humbled me.
His was the boat,
And His the skill,
And His the catch,
And His, my will."

V

THE IGNORED INNKEEPER

A Christmas Sermon

V

THE IGNORED INNKEEPER

A Christmas Sermon

Luke 2: 7: And she laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

The innkeeper is the ignored member of the Christmas story. He was the inventive innkeeper whose chivalry found room for Jesus in the manger.

The whispers of the impending birth of a child found the innkeeper alert and eager and courteous to make room for the mother and the child to be born in the sweet fresh straw in the stable where the cattle slept. The Caravansary was crowded with the laughing, happy, merry crowd thronging the Judean highways to be assessed by the governor.

Surely the keen instinct for trading in such an innkeeper was ready for these occasional and unusual pilgrimages converging toward Jerusalem, and he himself, as repeated history would suggest, gave up his own room to wealthy guests and sought an emergency bed in the raised floor of the cave where caravan and beast found shelter. Under the mild sky of Bethlehem unsheltered sleeping quarters in the stable, though rude perchance, were sufficient and comfortable for the immortal innkeeper who had himself sought a sleeping stall, not indeed so choice a place, but at least it gave him chance to fill his overflowing coffers as late arrivals

sought to pay hire to him should he vacate his own private chambers.

So he made room for Christ. The ingenious, human innkeeper, intimate in hospitality, would have been untrue to his attitude to entertain if the announcement of the embarrassed family had not taxed his gentle courtesy to find a bed—his own bed—the best he had, and he made room for the ceaseless miracle of an infant's birth.

Making Room for an Unprivileged Child

Why have the story-tellers of the manger and the star and the mother and the child imposed upon this obscure innkeeper the opprobrium of shutting out Christ?—"there was no room for him in the inn." Rather does the frequently magnanimous human nature insist that no wretch should be so poor in human kindness as to shut out such a gentle and radiant mother from the great inn, when the destiny of an unborn child was imminent. More natural and more human is the conviction that this innkeeper, prompt to obey a generous hospitality, made room for the babe—in the only available place left—not a royal room with tapestry and jeweled bed, but a glorified simple crib where dumb creatures ate in quiet peace.

I walked through an Oriental inn at Damascus in recent years, and there was the stall place for beasts around the walls of the court and above was a raised portico where the crowded late arrivals slept on the roof all open to the sky. But yesterday a friend from old Persia was a guest in my home and he confirmed to me the suggestion of my sermon. In his country, he said, the raised platform adjacent to the cattle stalls in the village inns is as yet the rendezvous of the neighborhood

gossips in the daytime and often waiting mothers were brought in their loneliness to this centre which in winter was covered and warm, and frequently children thus were born.

Humanity has its gallant knights of hospitality who seek to make room for the wandering, bewildered mothers with child in a thousand Florence Crittenden homes and in the wealthy lying-in hospitals of the rich. The innkeeper everywhere still makes room for the march of the race.

A dear friend told me the story of a preacher student, poor and wasted and sick, who had summoned strength to bring his family to the Baptist Hospital in Atlanta to save their lives. The dejected fellow found there was no room for his wife and child in the beds of the overcrowded hospital, but the innkeeper of the white, clean wards made a cot in the resident physician's office and took them in. Then the divinity student, himself thus relieved, collapsed when his mission of caring for his little brood was done and he fell to the floor unconscious. With virulent influenza he was stricken and there was no room left for him in this home of healing, but ingenious, loving, inventive humanity always finds an innkeeper who transforms a nurses' classroom into an emergency ward and the friendless soul is given room in the name of the Child of Bethlehem, inspired indeed by the emergency case of the inkeeper immortal. How could I bear the sights and the loathesome smell of disease, but that he saith, "Ye do it unto me when ye do it to one of these."

The Hospitality of the Innkeeper Glorified a Stable Into a Shrine

Hospitality still holds in its hands transforming power, and this stable in the cave of the Bethlehem Kahn is perchance the most famous shrine and the most frequently visited by pilgrims in all the world. The charm of the manger gathers its attractive power from the humble deed of hospitality on the part of the ignored innkeeper to the crowded-out Christ.

From the front in the Alsace-Lorraine sector during the days of the Armistice, I was returning by motor car toward the French Headquarters when suddenly out of the foggy light of the early morning loomed a shrine —the birthplace of the flaming-hearted peasant child who once had saved the people of France, the birthplace of Joan of Arc in Domremy in the valley of the Meuse —and we stopped for a moment at the dingy cottage glorified by the heroine of France into a national shrine. And into the back country of old Kentucky stands still a cabin of rude logs and a single window and an ugly chimney of mud and oak staves, and every day out from the beaten tracks of men pilgrims go to climb the granite shrine that shelters in its original simplicity the log cabin home of Abraham Lincoln.

But there is a spiritual lesson for us in this Christmas story. Hospitality to new-born ideals and thoughts and movements and inventions have changed lives hitherto commonplace and drab into shrines at whose brilliant altars civilization pays its homage. Those who showed hospitality to Christopher Columbus and his fantastic dreams saw them change into the discovery of a golden world of wealth. How oft has the growing world found the complacent lodgers in their comfortable inns,

inhospitable to its new thoughts, hopes and pleas—Luther at Worms, and Wesley at Epworth, and Orville Wright flying in the sand dunes of Kitty Hawk, surrounded by the hostile, indifferent, undisturbed, sleeping crowds, but the ignored innkeepers who saw and believed and encouraged have set the lights blazing on the milepost of progress in thoughts and discoveries and inventions all along the way.

Beautiful is the legend of the Christmas flowers of gold. The Black Forest was covered with snow and Hermann, the wood-chopper, came dragging weary footsteps to his poor, humble home, lighted at this twilight with burning candles. So poor was he that he hoped only for a porridge meal tonight. Something moved and cried aloud, and Hermann discovered a child lost in the forest near his hut. "You are lost and hungry," he said, "come into my arms and rest on my strong shoulder while I take you to my wife and children, for this is Christmas Eve."

Into the dim lighted cottage of the woodman came the two, and peasant hospitality had its chance, nor did it fail. "Come to the blazing logs," said the wife. "And sit in my chair at the table," spoke a child. "And share my bit of porridge," offered another.

And the room was lighted with a radiance that seemed to come from the face and eyes and flowing hair of the stranger, even as the genius of Correggio has made the Bethlehem stable to be illumined from within by the light shining from the manger of the Holy Child. And suddenly the child vanished, lifting his hands in benediction upon the poor wood-cutter's cabin home.

And they all cried, "The Christ Child comes on Christmas Eve."

In the morning Hermann walked over the snow and past the spot where last night had stood the Child, and instead of the crying stranger there stood two beautiful chrysanthemums—meaning flowers of gold—blooming in the snow, and every year, the legend says, the cabin is again transformed into a heavenly court as a portion of their poor food is set aside in humble hospitality to the visit of the heavenly guest—and on Christmas Day it is given to some hungry child—the ignored innkeeper has inspired transforming hospitality the world around.

Radiating from the Manger Door the Innkeeper Opened Highways Along Which the Wise Men Traveled to all the World

All at once the shame of a manger birth is lifted into fadeless glory by the humble service of the Immortal Innkeeper. Wealthy kings soon visited the transformed stable and the royal visitant Kings of the East, Gaspar and Melchior and Baltshazzar, which tradition teaches were descendants of Alexander the Great, the Queen of Sheba and of King Solomon—all of them came combining the riches of these famous Thrones, and were ready to dedicate it all to the Holy Child; but, behold, the beautiful simplicity of the stable and the manger so quickly enraptured them that luxury and material gifts paled away in the charm of the rude and heavenly surroundings of the manger room, and a passion of love and adoration so seized their hearts with desire to herald the tidings of the royal babe to all their nations that, bewildered, they left the unpretentious tokens of worship in thirty gold pennies, a little fragrant frankincense and healing myrrh, and found eternal possessions to be theirs in return.

And then they returned another way to India, legend says, and there proclaimed the story of the Child and the Saviour and the Christ. A new destiny had come to all mankind from the manger in the inn. And St. Thomas found these wise men in India whither his missionary journeys had taken him, and these kings, consecrating their luxury at last to the Holy Child, built a city and lived two years more in preaching to their fellow men and died—having gone out from the Bethlehem manger to bless the world.

The first Christian missionaries were the Wise Men, inspired to their journey by the sacrifice of the ignored and unpraised innkeeper. Unnoticed and forgotten, he had pointed the way for the messenger to go the whole world over proclaiming the story of the Wonderful, the Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. And Carey in India, and Henry Martin sweltering with fever in Persia, and Livingstone lost in Africa, and Borden of Yale longing to live for Christ in Kansu were all inspired to noble martyrdoms by the innkeeper long ignored in the Christmas story, who contrived to make room for the Holy Child, and gave to the Royal Family the sweetest and best hospitality he could command.

"The little boy of heavenly birth
  And far from home today
Comes down to find his ball, the earth,
  Which sin has cast away.
O brothers, let us, one and all,
  Join in to get Him back his ball."

VI

GIRLHOOD AND THE BROKEN VANITY BOX

VI

GIRLHOOD AND THE BROKEN VANITY BOX

Mark 14: 8: She hath used what she had.

Two girls lived on the slope of a hill, between the great city with walls and the great sea of salt. Their names were Martha and Mary. Martha was the drudge; Mary, the dreamer; Martha was the industrious; Mary, the idealist; Martha was the housekeeper; Mary, the home-maker; Martha was matter-of-fact; Mary, the mystic; Martha, the practical; Mary, the pensive; Mary, careful; Martha over-careful; Mary at her shrine, Jesus' feet; Martha cumbered of the unimportant things of life.

Of course, the mystic, the dreamer, the idealist, was the more beautiful girl. Her face was fair, and long, black hair gave her a graceful charm. Isn't it great she had long hair to wipe Jesus' feet when the moment came?

So Mary had saved for a year the equivalent in our day of one thousand dollars for a handsome vase of nard —spikenard—very costly, and it was a reserve she had hidden away for a gala day, a toilet dressing for the head and face and body, a vanity box in translucent alabaster, saved up for the day when the Roman governor should visit Bethany. Maybe the day of some great feast her fragrant toilet, spikenard, should give the touch and charm and the crown of perfect dress to a beautiful Jewish girl.

Why Not Keep a Vanity Box?

Her vanity box was Mary's reserve, saved for the high day of some kind of usefulness.

It is great to prepare one's self to be ready for the high challenges of life. Marshal Foch was a student at Metz when the Franco-Prussian War broke, and he was driven back to Paris with the other French students to live in the atmosphere of the humiliation which Bismarck heaped on France. But he set his face for a great day. He laid up his reserves in military tactics from that day. His ambition to be useful to France in a great crisis was his vanity box, and at the first Marne his moment came. He had prepared his vase of spikenard to break on himself, and France.

Witness the huge lump of coal dug from some southern mine. How it has stored its secrets away to be wooed into wealth by the chemist and his furnace. Here rise the seven primary colors out of the coal like a rainbow of beauty. The pharmacist waves his hand and salol and phenacetine and laxatives are born out of the black mass, perfume like orange blossoms rises, too, to show the mystic treasures kept, and finally glacier and landslide grip their hands about the block of coal and a diamond is there, and in the noon-day when the facets are made smooth the brilliant jewel scintillates with a thousand rays of sun. Always kept were the reserves of the coal mine for its day of glory!

That is why we educate. It is the process of preparation. It is the vanity box held for the day of opportunity. A boy without any education has one chance in one hundred and eighty thousand to have his name written in *Who's Who in America,* a volume which records

the distinguished in achievements. A grammar school boy will have one chance in thirty thousand; a high school graduate one chance in five thousand, and a college graduate one in less than two thousand.

The Jukes family were ne'er-do-wells, and there were one thousand two hundred in family. None were educated; only twenty learned a trade, and half of them learned that trade in the prisons; three hundred died in infancy; fifty women were notoriously bad. They spent an aggregate of two thousand three hundred years in the poorhouse, and the family cost the state of New York in jails, asylums, etc., more than a million and a quarter dollars.

The Edwards family had about one thousand four hundred members. Practically all were educated. They had two hundred and eighty-five college graduates, thirty-one college presidents, sixty-five college professors, railroad presidents, merchants, lawyers, doctors, ministers, governors, congressmen; and only one, Aaron Burr, who missed the Presidency by one vote, senator and Vice-President though he was, Aaron Burr is the only member against whose name "failure" may be written.

Education saves its vanity box, which constitutes a mighty reserve for the game of life. And it may be good to have a vanity box for nobly selfish reasons.

The church of Christ found she had been saving her vanity box when suddenly the life of her young people was released out of the young people's movement.

In 1881, Francis Clark established the Christian Endeavor Society, and following came the general awakening of the churches and the advance in the educational world through the new spirit of youth that set tingling all departments of modern life. The greatest era of

invention the world has ever known has been co-incident with the young people's movement in the churches. More inventions have been made in the last forty-five years than in the previous five thousand years, the best students assert.

In the twenty years preceding the new era, Baptists of the South increased seventy-four per cent; in the thirty years following the new movement the same churches increased one hundred and thirty-six per cent.

In twenty-two years preceding the young people's advent into church life there were ninety-two missionaries in the same denomination. In the twenty-one-year period following the advent of young people there were two hundred and seventy-eight missionaries, or an advance of three hundred per cent. Churches increased on foreign fields from seventy-five to three hundred and eighty, and membership from two thousand nine hundred and twenty-three to twenty-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-one, or an increase of tenfold. Receipts advanced from one and a half million dollars to six and a half million dollars. Sunday school attendance increased from one hundred and fifty-seven per cent gain to two hundred and forty-four per cent gain.

With the awakening church came the new era in industry, the new flow of students to the colleges, the influx of the younger generation in political life, and largely due to the direct influence of the young people's movement in the churches of Christ came the marvelous development of our modern age. Thirty-two years ago the B.Y.P.U. movement was begun among Southern Baptists.

And in our personal consecrations how wise a provision is the vanity box of reserves—a sacred preparation

for the day of sanctifying ourselves to some great service.

Bishop Woodstock tells of a little girl of eight whose mother's death committed to her care five little motherless waifs. And at thirteen, when ill unto death herself, with a body worn, and hands all withered with her overwork, she said to those attending her sickness:

"I hate to die and face Jesus with an empty life. I love him, but I do not know what I will say to him when he knows how little I have done for him."

"If I were you," said a good friend standing by, "if I were you, I would not say anything to him, I would just show him my hands."

It is good to have the vanity box ready!

Breaking Her Vanity Box Upon Christ

One day the great occasion came! Jesus Christ came into her life in a captivating visit to her family's friend, Simon the leper. Her brother Lazarus was there. Joy with abandonment ran high. Then one glimpse by Mary of the face of Jesus changed all her life.

"For His feet, my kiss, my hair, my kiss, He craves today.
He needs me, calls me—loves me—let me go."

And running across the narrow village street, she sought the secret place of the alabaster vase, and returning, broke her vanity box upon Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her long, black hair.

How many lives do you recall that were prepared for other things, and a meeting with Jesus Christ changed all their future course? Such a life led the Alexandrian University graduate. He had fitted out his life with the learning of his time, his vanity box was precious. When he met Jesus on a Damascan road, Paul cried, "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?"

One of the most charming chapters of missionary resignation lies in the beautiful story of the life of Mary Reed. A school teacher in the public schools of Cincinnati, she had equipped herself with a vanity case some day to be broken in more valiant service even than the early days of service. So away to India under the Woman's Missionary Society of the Methodist church she went, being called specially to the Zenanas of Cawnpore and then to Goda in India. Declining health summoned her to seek rest and American physicians at home. And came the marvelous day when Christ came into her house anew. She discovered a baffling disease of some sort had seized upon her and a white sore on the cheek near the ear was confirming testimony that God had given her a supreme chance to break her precious treasure upon the leper colony at Chandag, in India. Mary Reed a leper! and she says "that was the happiest day of my life, when I found every barrier that kept me from ministry to the lepers had been swept away."

Ever since in "Sunny Crest Cottage" in the "Heights Beautiful," still living with her lepers, Mary Reed's perfect trust breaks out in her beautiful word to her friend, "My Father knows the way I go, and I am sure it is the right way." The deed which she has done permeates the whole earth with its imperishable fragrance.

And Raymond Lull, court poet, skilled musician, and an accomplished scholar, with large furtune, lived the life of a gay knight in the court of the King of Aragon in the thirteenth century, and his vanity box was a possession that was the envy of the best courtiers of his day. At thirty-two years of age he found that Jesus had come with him face to face and he broke his ointment humbly upon Jesus' feet.

For eight years he studied the Arabic language simply to withstand Mohammedanism in its stronghold in upper Africa. He accepted poverty after providing for his family and finally, alone, went to Tunis and engaged in a famous debate in the open square, for which he was thrown into prison and narrowly escaped death. He returned again at fifty-five and again declared the gospel. This time he was told if he ever returned he would be killed, and at eighty years this marvelous man went back again and witnessed for Christ, and in a moment of fiery zeal he was stoned to death outside of the city, even as Stephen of old. He established colleges and wrote 180 books, and the martyred life of Raymond Lull left his costly gift at the feet of the Lord Christ.

And one other immortal name rebukes my own ministry each time I recall his story. Have you heard of Thomas Mayhew, governor of Martha's vineyard, who, after he was seventy, gave up his high office and became a missionary to the Indians? His son, John Mayhew, had labored ten years and built a church of nearly three hundred members and, sailing to the old Motherland to secure help to carry on his mission, he was lost at sea. Then came his white-haired father, at seventy, who worked in his son's stead, walking sometimes twenty miles through forests to his mission stations. In twenty years he gathered three thousand Indian Christians on the island, and at ninety-three years of age the old governor went home for his crown. The statesman's reserves were broken at the Master's feet, and the day of his renunciation won a nation of Indians to Christ.

I am wondering if you have a vanity box—some talent, some ability, some training, and you are saving it for some great day of opportunity. Please look into your

vanity box now seriously, and maybe you will not see yourself—maybe another face marred more than any man's will appear, calling to you, beseeching you to break the box in a supreme renunciation, and who can tell what great things you may some day do for Jesus the Saviour? I am sure you will see his face and hear his voice.

Renunciation Receives its Own Reward

So, the day of renunciation came and Jesus, moved by Mary's sacrifice, pronounced upon her the blessing of an immortal name. It is always thus—when the vanities are consecrated to Christ the world marks the imperishable deeds of Jesus' disciples. None knew the alabaster vase existed until it was broken, and then the charm of perfume pervaded all the house, and since that night the whole world has caught the fragrance of its aroma. Once I was honored with the pastorate of a church in the city of Philadelphia whose name is "Memorial." It is not a memorial to any person, but to a deathless deed.

"Wheresoever the gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her."

A story is told of a British lad of the World War. He had not wanted to enlist, and with lack of loyalty left for Ireland when the war began. He ran from duty and his king.

One day there came to him from the front in France a box sent by two officers, his dear companions before the war. The box contained two white feathers, mute testimony to his failure in his duty to king and country. He laughingly showed the package to his Irish sweetheart, who also was none too loyal to her king, but

immediately reading the disgrace written in the message of the white feathers, she reached to her hat and plucked another feather, and said, "Here is the third," and left her lover standing silent.

He was stung by the taunt, and left for the training camps of enlisted men, and then to the trenches. Once there came a barrage and he was swept back to the safety of underground dugouts, but in passing quickly he saw one of his old friends wounded. He asked permission to bring him through the fire to the dressing station, and though permission was granted under protest, with true courage he dragged his captain friend to safety, and placed in his hand one of the three white feathers—redeemed!

Then another zero hour, and he himself fell wounded and unconscious, but as he came out of his stupor he felt his hand held by another man. The two were glued together by the congealed blood from their wounds, but reaching in his blouse he thrust another of the feathers into the hand of his second companion, now cold in death.

Soon he himself was convalescing and returned home, wounded. The day came for decorations to be given to the brave. There was the king, pinning the Victoria Cross upon his blouse, then yonder was his Irish sweetheart, now a Red Cross nurse, smiling in the crowd, and, limping to her side, he gave back to her the last white feather!

His renunciation had won the reward. He had come back to see the face of the king—and to love.

The broken vanity box upon the altar of a mighty cause had brought to him the unfading honor, which is given to those who do imperishable deeds.

VII

WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH THE CHURCH?

A Sermon on the Holy Spirit

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2 Corinthians 3: 6: The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.

Revelation 2: 7: He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

"What is the matter with the church?" they were asking when the world fell on war. They are asking the same question today.

Well, the church does not need more cathedrals. Cathedrals often beguile the heart out of Christianity. The church has enough piles of poems in stone.

The church does not need more crowds. The churches are not so empty. Vast multitudes go to church, lean to the church as sympathizers, recognize its supreme place in the life of morals. The cathedrals are usually empty, but "the little brown church in the vale" still shelters a crowd of eager souls, more than sufficient for the task.

The church needs to "Catch the Flame." It needs to get power from on high. It needs to be baptized in the Spirit and in fire. The church, and not the college, must claim spiritual leadership for the age. The church has no business entering the sphere of intellectual leadership as such, any more than the college has the capacity for spiritual inspiration to the host of all the people. The church needs to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Jesus taught the disciples that they needed an endowment of power. They had the Ten Commandments, but they were not enough. They had the Sermon on the Mount, the Beatitudes, the Golden Rule, but the world will ever helpless be in creating a universal democracy on these. It is the vital life of God in the individual that is the needed thing.

The first robot I ever saw was in the form of a mechanical man driving an automobile, a quarter century ago. He could drive finely, except when he came to the corners. He drove skilfully with his companion until he turned sharply, then he careened. He would have fallen. He lost his equilibrium, because he had no differential, no orientation, no balance. He had no brain, no heart, no spirit within him. He was not alive. And the church needs a spiritual life within to keep its poise and usefulness, and life itself.

The Master's Degree and the Master's Decree

Nicodemus, the doctor of philosophy, had much learning. I suppose it is fair to say he had his master's degree. He belonged to the ruling senate of the Jews and without a doubt was a well-equipped teacher of Israel. Nicodemus had his diploma. He was an academician.

But the young teacher of twenty-nine had some kind of learning that his age did not quite understand. He kept talking about "being born from above," about speaking the words his Father had given him, about "the spirit of the Lord being upon me," and now to Nicodemus about "being born of the Spirit." "Ye must be born of the water and the Spirit." The Master's DEGREE does not go far enough; the Master's DECREE is "You

must be born of the Spirit." The age of Jesus marveled at him because they saw in a single glance and by hearing a single discourse that the wisdom which they had learned was foolish in the light of the weight his words carried and so they said, "Whence hath this man wisdom, never having learned?"

The personal eternal Spirit of God was present at Jesus' birth; the personal eternal Holy Spirit gave him wisdom; the eternal Holy Spirit of God anointed him to preach to the poor, to proclaim deliverance to the captives, and to do his works of mighty power.

The Master's DECREE is, "Ye must be born of the Spirit," an inner, vitalizing, resident, inherent, causative, imperative Personality that initiates and unfolds and perfects the life of God in the soul of the disciple who is born of the Spirit. His power is appropriated by faith—as indeed by faith we are inspired by the spirit of secular personalities from the pages of history—the one human and must be made to live by one's imagination—the other really living an inspiring, illumining, guiding, cleansing, spiritual Personality, making us perfect with definite vital power.

Governor James M. Brown, former chief executive of the State of Georgia, at one time sent me a brochure prepared by him on the Holy Spirit, and in his letter he declared he had never heard a sermon on the subject. His booklet was the transcript of an article which was printed over his signature in *The Sunday American* of Atlanta, Georgia.

The last paragraph which he requested country editors to broadcast was as follows:

"Therefore, while I have and crave no authority over our fellow citizens, yet longing to see our republic irradiating the glories of

spiritual power, I am writing to ask every preacher to preach this truth—and that he and all the church members who hear him will pray for the sanctifying, ennobling, and exalting gift of the Holy Spirit to be bestowed upon our entire country—the gift through which—wondrous thought!—we may be 'partakers of the divine nature.'"

The Letter Killeth but the Spirit Giveth Life

The Master's degree teaches us the twenty-six letters of the alphabet—ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVW XYZ. The Master's degree teaches us to organize them into words, "unadvisedly, not, where, Detroit." That is organization of the alphabet but not vitalization. But the Master's DECREE, "You must be born of the Spirit," breathes into the alphabet an eternal spiritual content and we cry, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want," and the spiritual verities of the universe quiver in that marvelous verse of the Psalmist. The letter can kill the alphabet—while the Spirit giveth it amazing life. The Spirit vitalizes.

Here is some copper wire. Here is a silkworm's web. Here, iron ore piled high. Here, a barrel of crude oil. These are the raw elements—and all dead, no life there. We organize them into an aeroplane. The engine is still and the electric spark is dead. But the "Spirit of St. Louis" feels the touch of a personality and the inert, dead elements rise on wings of wisdom—flying—potential now is the plane and it leaps over the sea in a single day. The aeroplane has vitalized the dead raw products by a personality into life.

The religion of the Holy Spirit's inspiring cuts through the veneer of social life; breaks the surface of convention; strips the garments from customs "more honored in their breach than their observance"; strangles pride; laughs at cant; calls a bluff, and withers pretense. Real

religion interprets the heart beat of a man, smiles when there is occasion for smiling; laughs when there is cause for laughter; pulsates and throbs and thrills with the vibrant life that is the harp of the soul and sings at its work, ripples with joy, and transforms the grey drudgeries of life into golden duties well performed.

The Master's Degree Differs from the Master's Decree as a Wax Flower Differs from a Rose

The life of God really invades the soul in the personality of the Holy Spirit. It is no stranger than the radio whose ether waves transmit personality through space by voice and indeed by vision of the distant singer. On December 12, 1928, *The New York Times* wanted to ring the phone of Mr. F. E. Meinholtz, its manager of radio station. He was in his home at Bellaire in Queens, just a few miles away, listening to code messages from the City of New York in the Antarctic with the Byrd Expedition. His telephone receiver was off in order to give him uninterrupted chance to receive through head phones the wireless message. *The Times* flashed to Antarctica, "Tell Meinholtz, *The Times* wants you to hang up your receiver, so it can call you on the phone." The message was relayed to Meinholtz, and had traveled twenty-two thousand miles in less than three seconds. How amazing, we say, and yet it is true. Why, indeed, is it an incredible thing to have the life of God brought within the human sanctuary by the Holy Spirit's personality?

Morality is the obeying of law, but spiritual life is the tuning of the soul to the guidance of the personal eternal Spirit of Jehovah. The difference between the moralities of life and the inner presence of spiritual

power is the difference between the whited sepulcher and the clean inside of the cup; the difference between time and eternity; between veneer and the heart of the mahogany tree; morality differs from the life that the Holy Spirit imparts as wax flowers differ from blooming roses.

The greatest souls which have adorned the halls of earth's eternal fame have ever found that the hidden, secret, concealed, unseen, covert, undisclosed, latent, veiled, screened, transcendental powers are the potential values of life. They have truly discovered that the highest things in life are the inmost, and their being born of the Spirit finds expression in the inherent, inborn, native, essential, constituent, vital life of God within the soul.

They ask again and again the question, "What is the matter with the church?"

The one answer is that the DECREE of Jesus, "Ye must be born of the Spirit," is still an enigma to the bewildered world.

The church must get back to its original simplicities. The church has a supreme spiritual mission to its community and it must show to its neighbors spiritual power or occupy an important corner in a city which might use its property for more useful purposes. The church is not in the field for more people, or more pocketbooks, or more personality; it has but one ministry—the unanswerable argument of spiritual leadership and power in civic and world enterprises. It can press no claim superior to vitalizing its organization with the Spirit of the living Christ. Its members must be born of the Spirit.

Christianity is a life, not a letter; an inspiration, not an institution; an enthusiasm, not an establishment; a

Saviour, not a shibboleth; a movement, not a memorial; a program, not a plan; a person, not a plea; Christianity is not a platitude, it is a planetary passion.

The church that lives is the church that loves and looks out and laughs and lifts. Our mission carries the spiritual sanction of simple service to all the people.

Witness John Wesley as a foreign missionary—learned, and efficient, and irreproachably correct in his life, "he fasts much, sleeps on the ground, fares on bread and water and goes barefoot to encourage the poor children who have no shoes," but he is still a tactless, blundering, powerless preacher in a Georgia colony of General Oglethorpe, and then a sea voyage to his old home in England —an acquaintance with the Moravians' knowledge of the inner life of the Spirit, the necessity of being born of the Spirit, and then the strangely warming of his heart in the meeting house in Aldersgate Street, and behold a transformed life born of the Spirit! He found a dead church frozen in the icy cerements of death and with the fingers of a Spirit-born soul he touched his sacred fire to the dead, lifeless establishment of his time and the frost of death melted into shining silver streams with spiritual tides and refreshing powers, and he girdles the globe with its beneficent waters which have encompassed the earth as the waters have covered the sea.

The Master's degree had failed the Oxford student as a foreign missionary, and upon his own testimony to his birth of the Holy Spirit, the Master's decree, "Ye must be born of the Spirit," had wrought the living miracle in the man who ranks among the six greatest men that ever lived. The Master's decree had changed the student's life and career.

In the name of Jesus Christ,
To whom the sea is as a drop of water,
And a fleck of dust the land;
To whom the pinions of an eagle are a fan,
And the shadow of a mountain as the shadow of his hand.

I asked for wings in the morning;
Plumed they were like an eagle for a great ascent;
I asked for wings at night,
And they were folded like a flag when the wind is spent.

I asked in the morning for power,
And it crashed like the tide of the sea over the reverberant floor;
In the evening I asked for peace,
And it rested like the shadow of a mountain upon a quiet shore.

For I asked in the name of Jesus Christ,
To whom the sheaves of shining stars
Are but a harvest ripe for reaping;
To whom the four winds of heaven
Are but a lullaby for sleeping.

VIII

GOD'S GOOD GENTLEMEN

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GOD'S GOOD GENTLEMEN

Philemon 24: **Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow-helpers.**

These partners of the pastor who stay by the stuff is the theme of this song of appreciation to Marcus, and Aristarchus, and Demas, and Lucas. Paul says of Aristarchus, writing in jail, "My fellow-prisoner"—"one Aristarchus being with us"—"Gaius and Aristarchus, companions in travel"; "yet still only Luke is with me." Demas and Mark slipped a little, yet were they true stand-bys of the great missionary journeys.

The Laymen, Our Beloved

This story is a song of love to the laymen, our beloved, those good men of our churches who have knocked at our door when the heart was sad, and the sparkle of the shining vase on our study mantel was gray from withered dreams. When they knocked they brought to us golden flowers to fill our empty Venetians and they cheered the heart for a new offensive. This is the story of that sweet-hearted man of prayer who was as sensitive to our lights and shadows as we were ourselves. When the hosts of the redeemed shall shine about the throne of the Lamb of God and their garments have been made white in the blood of the Lamb, not a few of that number will be the good laymen who have made possible

the long marches, the valiant advances and the crosses of honor that this dull seeing world always puts to the credit of the brave preachers who oftentimes are reckoned by the world to be the only good soldiers of the King. The laymen are the soldiers who tarry with the stuff.

"I Had a Friend"

These few words were the index that pointed to the beautiful life of Charles Kingsley. Elizabeth Barrett Browning said to him once, "What is the secret of your life? Tell me, that I may make mine beautiful, too." Kingsley answered in a whisper, "I had a friend." Very, very many preachers have seen the hey-dey of their success come to them because of the unfailing friendship of some nobly wrought layman. Quiet men they are at times, shrinking under the light of publicity, and ill at ease when the world praises their quiet ministries. Screened away behind those trailing rose vines that make beautiful so many summer houses in the gardens of God's churches, these good laymen of the kingdom are the unforgetable factors in many pastors' victories and achievements in the changes of the friendly years.

"For Dad"

Shortly after Christmas I learned a lesson. The merry days of the holidays had gone, and the world had turned again its hand, like the shepherd's, to the truer task of daily duties. The gifts that were given on Christmas were suffering the sacrilege of doing their part in the common rounds of life. But I chanced to strike with my foot a battered cardboard box. It was the woe-begone and demolished relic of a gift-bearing casket of

the Christmas season, and when I looked with keen affection and whirling imagination upon that stained and shattered, bruised, broken and blackened box, I read on the wrecked cover lid of the box, written in a young woman's scrawl, these words: "For Dad." I have been musing over this Christmas aftermath ever since. The discarded box had done well its loving mission, for it had carried to "Dad" the burning heart-throbs of "Your Darling Daughter," and here it was a tuft of ruined rubbish trampled by the feet of the rude and loveless on a city pavement. It was perfectly worthless now as we reckon it in our extravagant economy, for it had met its one sublime chance and was as thoughtlessly cast aside by a grateful father as it had been thoughtlessly sent on its spiritual mission by the overworked hands of the factory girl.

These Good Gentlemen of God

Have not all pastors had some experience like that which gathers a pretty and tragic story about the Christmas box? We have come in the fresh morning of a new pastorate suddenly upon a great-hearted layman whom by a subtle intuition we saw to be a gentleman of God. And there grew up between pastor and layman a very fair friendship—a fellowship of spiritual bonds; for personal friendships are upon much lower planes—the harmony of heroic hopes, and the joy of a mutual ministry were theirs, for the pastor soon learned that this gentleman of God was working with equal interest as was he to bring the coming day of the King. With the same red-stained hands we have clasped together the last trench of the enemy. Up the hail-paved heights we have fought together to reach the fortress of the evil man, and

in the armistice of the sweet, summer days we have slept side by side in the fragrant fields of rest. Jonathan and David never knew the delights of a love surpassing that of women more truly than has been the delightful companionship of the preacher and the nobleman of God.

The Crowning Permanent Factor

So the pastor must leave his church for another church! A voice that our friends, the laymen, can rarely understand has called him, and so he waves his hand and brushes back his tears and goes to the new and challenging task. Alas, sometimes there are no tears, but instead a dance of joy both on the part of the preacher and the church. But not so with our layman, who has been walking with us along the gladsome path of the King's highway. His heart is empty, crushed, broken, cast off and friendless in this moment, for he never expects another such friend as his departing pastor, and, maybe, if the next pastor cannot discover possibilities of great spiritual companionship in this same layman, he is left alone on the rough way, after the glory of the shining days, as the "Christmas Box for Dad" was left, to cherish the meditation that he had served as a good vehicle for the one pastor to pass on to better fame, while now he is left to be struck by the foot of anyone who may chance to pass that way.

While preachers come and go, and especially go, the good gentleman layman stays through the years, making, moulding, mothering the church of the living God, forever faithful until the day of the stainless robes shall come.

IX

THE STUDENT CHOOSING A LIFE WORK

(*Delivered at the Birmingham Student Conference*)

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THE STUDENT CHOOSING A LIFE WORK

(Delivered at the Birmingham Student Conference)

Matthew 21: 28: A certain man had two sons, and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work in my vineyard today.

I am very glad to be here to discuss the vital problems of this teeming and thrilling generation of young people. I have come to discuss with you in a practical sort of way and to hear the problems discussed by both experts and extremists. Miss Burrell gave me a good definition of an expert this morning: "An expert is a man who discusses more and more, less and less." And an extremist is a fellow who can tell you twice as much as he knows in five minutes. He is the kind that foams at the mouth. But neither the expert nor the extremist seems to get us anywhere with these mighty problems.

I have the hardest possible time keeping up with this generation. I once was quite up-to-date as I called a dandy a "jelly" and then a "cake-eater" and then a "cookie-pusher." It is hard now to keep up even with an Intermediate group in my own church, which turned on me and said, "Oh, flop your ears, there's a fly on your back." Mr. Leavell is even changing. He used to say to me ten years ago, "Speak on any subject you choose and talk as long as you please," but this morning at the breakfast table he gave me a letter, saying, "You speak at noon. You have thirty-five minutes. Five

minutes before you stop a white light shines. At stopping time a red danger signal flashes, and if you go over your time a gun will fire!" It is a changing generation. My wife years ago trusted me to bring her a box of candy on Saturdays, now she reminds me of it occasionally.

This Greatest Generation

Let me say first of all, I think yours is the greatest generation that has ever lived. My generation did its best, and its best was to bring on the world the catastrophe of a World War. Your generation won the World War. Mine drew civilization into the vortex of a world maelstrom; yours advanced to heights never before attained, and wherever I saw in the Argonne Forest graves of the American dead, I saw that the snows of the French winters had hallowed them with white and the sun of French summers had flooded them with resplendent beauty, thus dedicating these mounds as monuments to the martyrs that brought civilization back to mankind. You are the greatest generation that has lived because one hundred of you—perhaps one hundred and fifty of you—of the best college and university graduates we possess—have been standing on the piers of the ocean edge begging that my generation pay your fare and salaries as missionaries and we are too niggard to lay down the dust. You have gone at least one hundred and fifty lives ahead of my generation.

A few years ago I spoke at Shreveport to the Students' Conference and I was asked to sum up my impressions. I said then what I can reaffirm.

Our task is to make twin sisters of evangelism and education.

We must make more inspiring our intellectuality.

We must make our colleges centers of our crusaders.

We must have our campuses saturated and consecrated with the Spirit of Christ.

And how charmed was I yesterday to hear your finding in the matter of personal purity to be—"Christ is sufficient."

When I waited at San Marlo in France to return home after the war, the ships were very slow. I would stand and watch over the waters along the uncharted route which Jacques Cartier followed when he set sail for Canada, and I would quote Browning to myself:

> "I go to prove my soul!
> I see my way as birds their trackless way.
> I shall arrive! what time, what circuit first,
> I ask not: but unless God send hail,
> Or blinding fireballs, sleet or stifling snow,
> In some time, His good time, I shall arrive:
> He guides me and the bird. In His good time!"

Yes, indeed, he guides us, you and me, as the birds, and I was glad to hear you decide really to take sides with Count Zinzendorf in your generation. "I have but one passion. It is he. It is he!"

A Parable of Two Sons

But I must get to my subject. They asked me to speak to you about "Hearing the Master's Voice in the Choice of a Vocation." I will quote you some scripture. It is from the Gospel of Matthew. There are four verses running on from the twenty-eighth verse of the twenty-first chapter:

"But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work today in my vineyard.

"He answered, and said, I will not; but afterward he repented and went.

"And he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir; and went not.

"Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily, I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you."

Now I must be fair to accurate exegesis and tell you what Jesus meant by the use of the parable. "You Jews said you would accept the Messiah's command to go into his kingdom when he came, but you haven't done it. The publicans did not want the righteous God to have any kind of control over their lives and rebelled against their Father, but since I have come, it is they that have repented and have gone to do the work of my kingdom before you." That is the use made by Jesus.

Duty—Love—Grace—Three Motives

But I want to see if you and I cannot see in this parable a method of two boys finding out their father's will in going to work in his vineyard.

I am sure you see three motives that prompted them as their Father told them to go to work. The second boy said, "I go, sir, but he went not." Duty prompted him to declare his loyalty to his father, but duty was not a great enough motive to get him to work. Duty is a sublime word, "the sublimest word in the English language," said Robert E. Lee. "It is my duty to be about my Father's work," said the Crystalline Christ of twelve. "It is my duty to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," he cried again. Duty thrust its strong hands upon him and urged him always. Hear the great

Apostle say, "It is my duty to preach the gospel, woe is me if I preach not." And David Livingstone in Central Africa writing in his diary, says, "I fear that tomorrow I will be knocked in the head, but it is my duty to take my observations. Now I feel better. My God is a gentleman, and I will trust him." Duty, my friends, will make a man lay down his life. He will charge up a hill in the face of a hailstorm of machine bullets. He will spray the sky red with his blood in a battle of the clouds. But there is a motive in finding God's will greater than the motive of duty. Duty moved this second boy, but duty could not make him go to work.

Love is a greater motive than duty. I am sure you will agree. And this second lad no doubt said, "I love my father, and I will work for him," but you remember the Scriptures say, "He went not." "No man," you said to me, "loves his parents more than I do. I would do any task in the world to make my parents proud of my love for them. I love them supremely." And love is a greater motive. "But he went not."

There sat in the Scotch congregation one night a young scientist. He had gone to church with the soprano in the choir. And the preacher talked about the sailors who lost their lives at sea. He told how the mariner's compass needed perfecting and a prize of many thousand pounds would be given the inventor of such an instrument that would save hundreds of thousands of lives. On the way home that night the young fellow said to his sweetheart, "I mean to work for that prize and get the many thousand pounds offered by the empire."

"Ah, laddie," answered the soprano, "you must learn in life to work for love and not for reward." And moving under that inspiring word of the girl he loved, his

thoughts roamed beyond the heavens hovering over the sea, beyond where "men are blue lights in the firmament of God," and he resolved to work for love and he perfected the compass and won the reward.

There is nothing greater than a man's love for his wife except it be his love for his country; there is nothing above a man's love for his country except it be his love for his mother; and there is nothing greater than a man's love for his mother except it be a man's love for his God.

The second boy said, "I will go to work because I love my parents," but he went not. Love was not sufficient motive to make him go to work.

But the first boy, stubborn, recalcitrant, unyielding, and hard, said, "I will not," but says the story, "afterwards he repented and went." Sometime, at some great place, at some great hour, he repented that he had followed his own wrong will. Maybe in tears, maybe in a moment of ecstasy where the goodness of God was leading him to repentance, he found his Father's will, heard his Master's voice and went to work.

Grace the Supreme Motive

Duty had failed; love had not been sufficient; but grace had won. Grace is a divine experience that lifts us out of our wilful selves into the realm of God's will and word and way.

I doubt if you like this old word "Grace." It is a preacher's word. It abounds in the New Testament, but I rather feel when you hear it you shrug your shoulders and say, "Oh, give us a word up-to-date." Long-faced preachers use old-time words anyway, do they not? It takes lots of brains to know what these big old-time

words mean, anyway! Yes, you see my point, because you smile!

Grace is the experience of the life of God in the soul, overflowing, overfilling, overshadowing our everyday living with joy, so that we go about the world loving, forgiving, and serving all the race of man. It comes at the moment when the penitent heart seeking God's fellowship, cries, "I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight and am no more worthy to be called thy son."

Duty is the highest virtue of the man that lives under the reign of law; love is the highest virtue that can be experienced by a man unredeemed; grace is the virtue supreme—that marks the man as newly born, as heaven born, as having experience of his actual fellowship and sonship with God.

Once I heard Dr. Jowett give this wonderful definition of grace:

"Grace is divine energy.
Grace is divine energy of holiness.
Grace is divine energy of holiness issuing in the ministry of love.
Grace is divine energy issuing in the ministry of love in quest of the unlovely.
Grace is divine energy of holiness issuing in the ministry of love in quest of the unlovely, and by the communication of itself, converting the unlovely into loveliness.
Grace is the holy love of God in quest of unlovely man, seeking to woo and win and to transfigure him into the loveliness of the Lord Jesus Christ."

Duty is manly and human, love is divine and heavenly; grace is deity itself, lighting up the best in man, thus transforming the world with the life that came to be the light of the world. Grace is finding the glory in the gray things of life.

Duty attends church on Sunday morning, because that is the least a disciple of Christ would do; love supports

the church because it is the joy and pride of one's life; grace gives up steamheat in a new cottage to build a unit of a leper asylum in India as a new trophy for our Christ. Grace is love plus the divine lift. Grace is unmerited love. Grace is love outdoing itself on the Cross. Grace is the thing that happens in our life when we have repented and yielded to the Father's will. "It is the downward stoop of God," said one. And I heard a great English preacher, Thomas Phillips, define grace in these words:

"Love turns towards the lovable, grace to the undeserving. Love often looks upward, grace always looks downward. Love looks out for excellency, grace looks out for sin. Love discovers merit, grace creates it. Love has to be evoked, grace acts of its own accord. Love is often involuntary, grace always takes the initiative. It is love beyond the bounds of love, love outloving love, love loving where there is no ground to justify the loving. The infinite coming in touch with the finite, majesty with meanness, and stainless purity coming into contact with the sins of men like the snow of the heaven with the mire and slush of the street. Grace is the Christ-likeness of God."

So if you have not come to stand in the place of grace —God's will and life your mastering motive—well, it does not make much difference what you do in life.

But I promised you to speak practically as to how you might find the Master's voice in the choice of a vocation, and I will use three precepts—short sentences around which we may easily gather something to take back home to think upon—I am just suggesting, you know! Here is the way to choose a career:

Follow the gleam!
Favor your bent!
Watch for the Open Door!

Follow the Gleam

Follow the gleam. God will give you a hint now and then. This first boy found his father's will as a gleam when he had repented. Some sin put away. Some habit strangled. Some wilful self effaced and the gleam came —"And afterward he repented and went."

How many men do you know who started life with one thing in view and then a gleam came? There's Dr. Grenfel of the Labrador, assistant to a great surgeon in London. He was in line to fall into a lucrative practice when on a day a gleam came from Labrador. The frozen north was crunching its icy jaws on the poor fisher folk and life there was hard. Children were born amid squalor and drugs could not be obtained. And there this apostle of the north has transformed a whole people. I saw a picture of two foundling girls, blind, and left on the doorstep of his hospital. Then there was shown a picture of two beautiful young ladies, graduates of a school in Kentucky, with beautiful shining eyes. They were the same babies, grown, educated and teaching in the schools of Labrador. Follow the gleam!

I always feel privileged to call Dr. Russell Conwell my friend, for he and I had neighboring churches in Philadelphia. He began as a lawyer, an infidel lawyer, and a captain in the army found him literally driving out of his tent his gentle Christian orderly, Johnny Ring. Once his camp was surprised by a Confederate raid and his camp destroyed and the bridge burnt, cutting off Conwell from his own burning camp. But here came Johnny Ring hand over hand over the burning timbers of the

bridge, crushing the embers with the flesh of his bare hand at every grip, and finally fell exhausted, but with the sword which Dr. Conwell's friends had given him. Johnny Ring died, but Conwell caught a gleam and he followed. He became a great Christian preacher. He built hospitals and Temple University with five thousand students, and once as I drove with him in a cab to a lecture he said to me:

"I have never seen a football game. I have never seen a professional baseball game, I cannot attend concerts and lectures. Two hundred nights a year I lecture besides preach on Sunday, but when I grow tired of it all I go to the sword of Johnny Ring on my study wall and catch the gleam anew and keep on going on."

And I think of the Dutch physician, Theodosious Vanderkemp, now beyond fifty, and something happens—a terrible accident takes off his wife and daughter. He was lieutenant of the navy and captain of the Dragoons. Skilled in medicine and brilliant in letters, and he goes off to Africa. In the hold of the ship he ministers to the slaves in their wretched diseases. The first few years he spent five thousand dollars of his own money to buy the native children out of slavery. Robert Moffat said of him, "He left a palace for a hovel. The consort of princes and kings became the companion of the Hottentots and Kaffirs in all their unspeakable squalor." But are we not assured that he followed the gleam when we know that for fifty years after he died the native converts were called, not Christians, but "The Vanderkemps." Follow the gleam!

Favor Your Bent

Favor your bent! I do not ask you as do some of the psychologists to follow your bent. Maybe God would have you do something you have not now here chosen as your bent. But favor your bent.

David Livingstone's bent led to China, but God's will to Africa; William Carey planned to go to Polynesis, but India made him immortal; Judson sailed for India, but a Greek Testament was God's voice which led him to Burmah. Paul wanted to preach in Bithynia, but he was hindered by God's Spirit which led him to Europe and fixed the centre of Christianity in Europe rather than among the lands of the unspeakable Turks to the East.

We found in the city of Atlanta, in our early pastorate, Mrs. A. L. Crawley. She was a bright and successful stenographer in the city, but there was a bent in her life. She said to me, "I am going as a missionary to China."

"Is that so?" I answered. "How long have you been choosing fields where God would have his missionaries serve?"

Maybe I ought not to have spoken that way, but I wanted to show the right way to a fine young woman. "Suppose God wants you in Africa or to stay at home," I said.

And she married a preacher (laughter). And why do you laugh? That is not such a bad thing to do. But all the time in college and in these after years she has followed her bent. And when I see her now going all over the gentle Southland of ours teaching Juniors and Intermediates in study classes and teaching her own book, I say to you, it is better to remain at home, touched

almost by the finger of the white plague, and inspire a hundred more girls and boys to take your places of highest leadership in the Kingdom of God than to choose your field for yourself.

Sam Higginbothom, while he was a senior at Princeton, spent one Sunday with the Y.M.C.A. secretary and Monday morning was returning home. There was one vacant seat in the trolley car and that was by the side of Henry Forman, a missionary from India.

"What year are you in college?" the missionary asked.

"This is my senior year," he answered.

"What are you going to do then?"

"Oh, a theological seminary and then a missionary to China or South Africa."

"Why don't you go to India?"

"Because I can't cope with those keen philosophical minds there. I want to go to China or South Africa where I can deal with the mass of the ignorant people."

Henry Forman led him to consider India, and there he finally went, first as a teacher and now a farmer. He had favored his bent. He wanted to touch the lives of the simple-minded people. Now by the touching of more than two hundred thousand farmers by intensive methods of cultivating their farmlands, he has made self-sustaining churches all over India, where there was dearth and poverty before. And on the side he runs a leper asylum to take up his spare time. How wonderfully God has led and how keenly Sam Higginbothom has favored his bent.

Watch for the Open Door

Watch for the open door! I do not ask you to enter the open door. I do ask you to wait for the door to

open. I ask you to watch for the open door! That is where your partnership with God plays its part. You must use your head and eyes and watch for the way God will lead. He will hint his way for you many times if you are alert to watch.

Between six and seven, I gave my life to Jesus Christ. At ten and a half I joined the church and Dr. Henry M. Wharton put his hands upon my head and said,

"Friends, some day I predict this little boy will preach."

I went to the schools, having caught an early gleam that some day I would be a preacher. Once, with an internal bruise, I was safety man in a football game and a big fellow broke through the line with interference. I came up quickly and said to myself, "I'll get him if it kills." Because I knew a preacher would do that way. And when I whipped them from third to first base, I would vow to myself that nobody would get them over faster or straighter than I, because a preacher must always give his best.

And once I went to Toronto to a student convention, much like this one today, and I heard them challenge me to be a missionary volunteer. I was a ministerial student and I heard Robert Speer say in a wonderful way:

"Into the woods my Master went,
Clean forspent, forspent.
Into the woods my Master came,
Forspent with love and shame.
But the olives, they were not blind to him,
The little grey leaves were kind to him,
The thorn tree had a mind to him,
When into the woods he came."

And then he challenged us by adding, "Will you not be as kind to your Master as the thorn bush that was not blind to him?" And my head dropped, and my will at Jesus' feet, I said, "Lord, if you want me for a shoemaker in America, I am willing. If I am to blister under Africa's hot sun, I surrender now."

Dr. Conwell tells how one night he had attended a sociable—you would call it in your day a party—in the Berkshire hills where he lived. He was returning home rather late through a driving blizzard of his New England winter, and he watched for a lamp which his mother always placed in the window over the central road to his house. But that particular night when he needed it most he missed the light. It was not there. He trudged his way through the snowdrifts and knocked at the door. It was locked, and quite resentfully he banged away again. Why should there be no light on this night and why was the door locked? After a while his father looked out of the window overhead and said,

"Russell, go around to the side door. Your mother put the lamp there tonight. She thought it was the best way to come."

So, still angered, he sought the other door. The latch was lifted. The fire was blazing a cordial welcome. There were sweet cakes on the table, and Conwell went resentfully off to bed. At the breakfast table he was moody and showed his ill temper and his mother was silent. Ah, there is a tragedy in our lives when our mothers are silent, when we have hurt their hearts! Conwell went off to the barn to do the chores and his father followed him.

"Russell, I think you have hurt your mother's feelings. She thought she was doing the best thing for you

last night when she left the other door open and set the light in the other window. It was the best way to come home, you know, and shorter."

Dr. Conwell then says, "It is a long time since she left me—my mother is gone—but ever to this day I wonder if I can ever forgive myself for not seeing the open door and the light she had put in another place."

Watch for the open door—different, removed, in another direction it may be from our choices. God puts it there sometimes!

Two years ago I went back to my old boyhood home in Ole Virginia and with a companion of my early days I visited my parents' graves. The soft Southern winds sighed through the cedar trees and the sun fell with soft glow on their graves where they lie lulled to that last sleep by the music of the waves of the river Elizabeth.

I lifted my hat and prayed aloud, and my friend said to me, "Isn't it great to be able to come back home after forty years and win our boyhood friends' children to Christ?"

And there under the beauty of the spring day sky I thought in my heart of hearts,

"Well, I suspect it was God's will that I should be a preacher."

I had followed the gleam, favored my bent, and watched for the open door.

"Have you and I today
Stood silent as with Christ, apart from joy, or fray
Of life, to see His face;
To look, if but a moment, in its grace,
And grow, by brief companionship, more true,
More nerved to lead, to dare, to do
For Him at any cost? Have we today
Found time, in thought, our hand to lay

In His, and thus compare
His will with ours, and wear
The impress of His wish? Be sure
Such contact will endure
Throughout the day; will help us walk erect
Through storm and flood; detect within the hidden life
Sin's dross, its stain; revive a thought of love
For Him again; steady the steps which waver;
Help us see the footpath meant for you and me."

X

SIDNEY LANIER—MUSICIAN OF LANGUAGE

X

SIDNEY LANIER—MUSICIAN OF LANGUAGE

Sidney Lanier breathed his soul into the soul of his rosewood flute, and out from its responsive lips there leaped notes of music never before so charming to man, and none the less did his poetic genius play on the keyboard of his mother-instrument, the English language, to discover in its secret glories wondrous words and phrases, which in themselves carry cadences and melody of music.

Always a mystic, Lanier discerned truth at its fountain head, and true, always, to the rudiments of rhythm, he touched words with a master hand; and symphonies, and lyrics, and songs he expressed, sometimes, in single words.

> "How still the plains of the waters be,
> The tide is in his ecstasy,
> The tide is at its highest height,
> And it is night!"

Sings the song of the rising sea; "And the little grey leaves were kind to him" somehow croons the minor chord of creation's groaning; "I hurry amain to reach the plain" is a fantasy played upon a lilting instrument of reed; while "I will build me a nest on the *greatness* of God" breaks forth in the single word "greatness" as an oratorio of confidence thrummed from the chords of some celestial harp. Sidney Lanier, the Southern Immortelle, is at once the greatest American musician of language.

"For this is peace—to lose the lonely note of
Self in love's celestial-ordered strain;
And this is joy—to find oneself again
In Him whose harmonies forever float
Through all the spheres of song, below, above,
For God is music, even as God is love."

In this day of fierce attrition between intellect and industry for sovereignty of social power, there is coming more and more to its rightful place the reawakening of mysticism as that attitude toward life which is the supreme quality of being. It is the quality of soul by which truth is divined directly; it is the acknowledgment that the "verdict of the feelings" has a right to have its day in court, and it is the comprehension that the eyes of the soul discern as clearly as the eyes of sense, and the mystic's power lies in training all of his attitudes, and appreciations, and faculty of soul to converge in the discovery of beauty and mystery, and wonder directly and without a screen, or intermediary. This was the attitude of Lanier to language—where other men looked for meters, he saw melodies; where some found rhyme, he heard rhythm; syllables had tonic values to him, and obscure words and sleeping phrases under his touch awakened to epiphanies of singing hosts. And the poet himself in a single sentence discloses his inner soul, "Let us abandon the idea that music is language and substitute the converse idea that language is music."

Born in Macon, Georgia, Lanier belongs peculiarly to the South, but his art belongs to the race of men. His songs have a universal note, his rhythm a flow that fits any tune and a rapture that seizes the heart of mankind and makes it beat with heaven. The "Song of the Chattahoochee" does not celebrate that river only, but pictures the purl of any stream. The Marshes of Glynn are in Brunswick on the Georgia coast, but Lanier's

"Marshes of Glynn" are in Virginia; I have seen them in New Jersey, and France, and Merry England, and among the rushes of the Nile. His poetry has about it that inevitable flash of art, which the student at once recognizes as the touch of eternity, which makes his verse immortal.

My own home is but six houses distant from the birthplace of this genius of verse, and quite recently one of my townsmen told me of finding a prodigal volume of Sidney Lanier's Poems having wandered off into the far country of a Norwegian gentleman's library. And I have learned a new philosophy of life—it matters not *where* a man lives, it only matters *what* he lives. Greatness cannot be kept in the square of a village green, but genius has wings with which it mounts on high and circles the world.

With the French blood of a Huguenot refugee endowing him naturally with an artistic temperament through Jerome, Nicolas and Thomas Lanier, strains coming from the Elizabethan court through the Colonial cavalier forebears of musical, painting and political temperaments, Sidney Lanier lifted into greatness these endowments with the touch of a master's soul, transcendently the best of the line.

Born where the Appalachian foothills sheer off to rolling uplands, and where the slopes of hills go gently down to the coast of the sea, Lanier discovered in Macon, Georgia, the blending of the Hills of Haversham with the Marshes of Glynn. Here in his own city his soul found the heights of heaven's green expansions, and amid whose beauty and music he only might live.

Four Master Passions

The musician of language was a master of moods—great passions which mark out his life as the Southern Immortelle. His fame rests upon the work of a few fevered years, poverty-filled years—altogether but thirty-nine—yet years sufficient for him to have written large his name among the singers sent from God.

The Dominant Passion of Lanier's Life was his Faith in the Beauty of Holiness.

To be great is first to be good. No shambling stains soil his soul from the poems of prison camp to the courageous fight for enough breath to sink to peaceful sleep upon the high heights of his North Carolina skyland camp. Holiness is the finding a career in the will of the Altogether Holy One, and so through tragedy and tribulation of body and mind the gentle soul of Lanier sought for holiness, led in this quest by the dominant passion for the beauty of holiness. He knew that holiness hated war, yet found he sweet peace as a soldier doing the will of his Holy God.

> "The point which I wish to settle is merely by what method shall I ascertain what I am fit for as preliminary to ascertaining God's will with reference to me; or what my inclinations are, as preliminary to ascertaining what my capacities are—that is, what I am fit for."

A letter descriptive of Robert E. Lee asleep in an open-air church service in camp about Petersburg, finds Lanier beholding a majestic holiness even in the repose of a fagged, tired, and noble spirit, as Lee.

> "Presently his eyes gradually closed, and he fell gently asleep. Not a muscle of him stirred, not a nerve of his grand countenance twitched; there was no drooping of the head, nor bowing of the figure. . . . As he slumbered so, sitting erect, with arms folded upon his chest, in an attitude of majestic repose, such as I never saw assumed

by mortal man before; as the large and comfortable word fell from the preacher's lips; as the lazy cannon of the enemy hurled a screaming shell to within a few hundred yards of where we sat, as finally a bird flew into a tree overhead and sat and piped small blissful notes in unearthly contrast with the roar of the war engines; it seemed to me as if the present earth floated off through the sunlight and the antique earth returned out of the past, and some majestic god sat on a hill, sculptured in stone, presiding over a terrible yet sublime contest of human passion."

Seeking to know holiness, Lanier sought it always. Mr. John B. Tabb, in a letter to Charles Day Lanier, the oldest son of the poet, writes:

"To realize what our surroundings were, one must have lived in a prison camp. There was no room for pretense or disguise. Men appeared what they really were, noble or low-minded, pure or depraved; and there did one trait of your father's character single him out. In all our intercourse I can remember no word or conversation of his that an angel might not have uttered or listened to. Set this down in your memory. . . . It will throw light upon other points, and prove the truth of Sir Galahad's words, 'My strength is as the strength of ten, because my heart is pure.'"

The beauty of holiness—the beautiful satisfactions of God's justice and love meeting on a Cross—is exquisitely sung in the charming "Ballad of the Trees and the Master."

"Into the woods my Master went,
Clean, forspent, forspent.
Into the woods my Master came,
Forspent with love and shame.
But the olives, they were not blind to Him,
The little grey leaves were kind to Him:
The thorn tree had a mind to Him,
When into the woods He came.

"Out of the woods my Master went,
And He was well content.
Out of the woods my Master came,
Content with death and shame,

When death and shame would woo Him last,
From under the trees they drew Him last;
'Twas on a tree they slew Him—last—
When out of the woods He came."

Nothing need be said after these lines. The woods have rung out the sorrows of Christ in the garden and the trees have clasped their muffled hands in requiem!

The Guiding Passion of Lanier's Life was his Faith in the Holiness of Beauty.

How strangely celestial are these words of his: "For indeed we may say that he who has not yet perceived how artistic beauty and moral beauty are convergent lines which run back into a common ideal origin, and who is not afire with moral beauty just as with artistic beauty—that he, in short, who has not come to that stage of quiet and eternal frenzy in which the beauty of holiness and the holiness of beauty mean one thing, burn as with one fire, shine as one light within him; he is not yet the great artist."

He seizes the song of the Chattahoochee, muddy with yellow slime, pale with the sunbaked silt along its stained soil covered and green wooded banks, sluggish waters not even with the charm of a raging rapid, and with wizardry of language Lanier sings of the beauty that tumbles from the hills of Habersham down through the valleys of Hall, where flowers yearn, and mills are to turn, and the lordly main calls—the holiness of beauty gleams out of the poor, hidden, unhallowed stream.

"All down the hills of Habersham,
All through the valleys of Hall,
The rushes cried, Abide, Abide,
The wilful waterweeds held me thrall,
The laving laurel turned my side,
The ferns and the fondling grass said, Stay,
The dewberry dipped for to work delay,
And the little weeds sighed, Abide, Abide,

Here in the hills of Habersham,
Here in the valleys of Hall.

"But oh, not the hills of Habersham,
And oh, not the valleys of Hall,
Avail: I am vain for to water the plain.
Downward the voices of duty call—
Downward to toil and be mixed with the main,
The dry fields burn, and the mills are to turn,
And a myriad flowers mortally yearn,
And the lordly main from beyond the plain
Calls o'er the hills of Habersham,
Calls through the valleys of Hall."

He lays his head beside a violet. The smell of the friendly woods and the pulse in the soil transport him into heaven's dream of the nearness of God. He writes in his notebook an unfinished fantasy of a poem:

"I know that thou art the word of my God, dear Violet:
And oh, the ladder is not long that to my heaven leads.
Measure what space a violet stands above the ground:
'Tis no further climbing that my soul and angels have to do than that."

Had he finished this thought of beauty, what a glory he would have wrought about the purple violet! I have put into a short poem what I thought he might have said, infinitely more with beauty and of song. It is but a suggestion of his notes:

"How high 'tis to heaven, seeketh sage and the seer;
Know the way to heaven; doth its height appear?

"Oh, the height to heaven is the stoop of its God,
Where violets burst through the softening clod,
And the blossoming flowers mark divinely the sod!

"For heaven and earth keep tryst in the room,
When violets, by God, are kissed into bloom."

Music to him was love really in search of a word. His contribution to English literature was this supreme quality of his poetry. Tennyson sang with a rythmic flow,

and Poe charmed with a fantastic and wild weirdness of musical song, but Lanier's is the heaven-born rhythm of words and meter and thought. No one could read the Marshes of Glynn without chanting music in the transepts of his soul.

. . . . . .

"Ye marshes, how candid and simple and nothing-withholding and free
Ye publish yourselves to the sky and offer yourselves to the sea!
Tolerant plains that suffer the sea and the rains and the sun,
Ye spread and span like the catholic man who hath mightily won
God out of knowledge and good out of infinite pain
And sight out of blindness and purity out of a stain.

"As the marsh hen secretly builds on the watery sod,
Behold I will build me a nest on the greatness of God:
I will fly in the greatness of God as the marsh hen flies
In the freedom that fills all the space 'twixt the marsh and the skies:
By so many roots as the marsh grass sends in the sod
I will heartily lay me a-hold on the greatness of God:
Oh, like to the greatness of God is the greatness within
The range of the marshes, the liberal marshes of Glynn.

. . . . . .

"Farewell, my lord sun!
The creeks overflow; a thousand rivulets run
'Twixt the roots of the sod; the blades of the marsh grass stir;
All is still; and the currents cease to run;
And the sea and the marsh are one.

"How still the plains of the waters be!
The tide is in his ecstasy.
The tide is at his highest height:
And it is night.
And now from the Vast of the Lord will the waters of sleep
Roll in on the souls of men,
But who will reveal to our waking ken
The forms that swim and the shapes that creep
Under the waters of sleep?
And I would I could know what swimmeth below when the tide comes in
On the length and the breadth of the marvelous marshes of Glynn."

Angels are caroling there, orchestrations under the waters of sleep play lullabies to the nurseries of heaven and the Master has come to sing, mastered by his high-

est mood, the passion for music in words, tone colors in words, songs in words, flute-notes in words, violin's berceuse in words, heaven's chorus to earth.

The Mastering Passion of Lanier's Life After All was his Faith that Music is Heaven Sent.

"I can recall," says Mr. T. F. Newell, his classmate and roommate, "on such occasions I have seen him walk up and down the room, and with his flute extemporize the sweetest music ever vouchsafed to mortal ear. At such times it would seem as if his soul were in a trance, and could only find existence, expression, in the ecstasy of tone that would catch our souls with his into the very seventh heaven of harmony. Or, in a merry mood, I have seen him take a banjo, for he could play on any instrument, and as with deft fingers he would strike some strange new note or chord, you would see his eyes brighten, he would begin to smile and laugh as if his very soul were tickled while his hearers would catch the inspiration, and an old-fashioned 'walk-round and negro breakdown,' in which all would participate, would be the inevitable result."

Once he heard an unusual open-air concert in Grand Central Park Garden and he writes:

> "The baton tapped and waved, and I plunged into the sea, and lay and floated. Ah! the dear flutes and oboes and horns drifted me hither and thither, and the great violins and small violins swayed me upon the waves, and overflowed me with strong lavations, and sprinkled glistening foam in my face, and in among the clarinetti, as among waving water lilies with flexile stems, I pushed my easy way, and so, even lying in the music-waters, I floated and flowed, my soul utterly bent and prostrate."

A beautiful incident which happened on the troop-ship carrying him from captivity to freedom is described by the good woman who brought him help:

"At last he turned his eyes slowly about until he saw Lilla, and murmured: 'Am I dead? Is this Lilla? Is this heaven? . . .' To make a long story short, the Colonel assisted us to get him above to our cabin. I can see his fellow prisoners now as they crouched and assisted to pass him along over their heads, for they were so packed that they could not make room to carry him through. Along over their heads they tenderly passed the poor, emaciated body, so shrunken with prison life and benumbed with cold. We got him into clean blankets, but at first he could not endure the pain from the fire, he was so nearly frozen. We gave him some hot soup and more brandy, and he lay quiet till after midnight. Then he asked for his flute and began playing. As he played the first few notes, you should have heard the yell of joy that came up from the shivering wretches down below, who knew that their comrade was alive. And there we sat entranced about him, the Colonel and his wife, Lilla and I, weeping at the tender music, as the tones of new warmth and color and hope came like liquid melody from his magic flute."

In Lanier's "Symphony" the poet and musician interplay. An orchestration is arranged and the prelude begins:

"O Trade, O trade, would thou wert dead;
The time needs heart—'tis tired of head."

and one by one the instruments interlude their voices:

"'We're all for love,' the violins said.
'I'm all for heart,' the flute-voice said,
Sings out the melting clarionet,
'I too will wish thee utterly dead
If all thy heart is in thy head.'
Then thrust the bold, straightforward horn
'We maids would far, far whiter be
If that our eyes might sometimes see
Men maids in purity.'
And then the hautboy played and smiled,
'Never shalt thou the heavens see
Save as a little child thou be.'"

Until the ensemble in thrilling symphony bursts:

"Yea, Love, sole music-master blest,
May read thy weltering palimpsest,
To follow Time's dying melodies through,
And never to lose the old in the new,

And ever to solve the discords true—
Love alone can do.
And ever Love hears the poor-folks' crying,
And ever Love hears the women's sighing,
And ever sweet knighthood's death-defying,
And ever wise childhood's deep implying,
But never a trader's glozing and lying.

"And yet shall Love himself be heard,
Though long deferred, though long deferred;
O'er the modern waste a dove hath whirred:
Music is Love in search of a word."

The Supreme Passion of Lanier's Life Lay in his Faith that Christ is the Cornerstone of All Creation.

Lanier hated war because war is the converse of the teaching of his "Crystal Christ." He accepted war as the imposition of a not yet flawless world, and he withered under its rigors until he was touched by the fatal finger of tuberculosis and death. One of the brilliant young American composers said to me lately that the trend in modern musical composition is to intersperse as many discords as possible in the theme while still sustaining the melody, and in some such way did Lanier's musical genius interpret war. The musician of language made his prose rage, and discord and storm when the outrage of war is described as doing violence to the principles of Christ.

In his "Tiger Lilies," a book of fiction and prose, Lanier shows the futility of war and its horrors. He makes an East Tennessean say in reproaching his brother who had turned traitor:

"We was poor. We ain't never had much to live on but our name, which it was as good as gold. And now it ain't no better than rusty copper; hit'll be green and pisenous. An' whose done it? Gorm Smallin! My own brother, Gorm Smallin!

"When he finds his brother he says to him, 'Ef ye had been killed in a far battle, I mought ha' been able to

fight hard enough for both of us; for every time I cried a-thinkin' of you, I'd ha' been twice as strong, and twice as clear-sighted as I was before. But sich things as these burns me and weakens me and hurts my eyes that bad that I kin scarcely look a man straight furard in the face. Hit don't make much difference to me now whether we whips the Yanks or they whip us. . . . We is kin to a deserter!

"'But you won't git home, an' you won't be left dead nowher; they cain't neither smile at you nor cry for you; what'll they do ef anybody speaks yer name? Gorm Smallin, they'll lift their heads high and we'll hang ow'in low. They'll scourge an' we'll blush for ye. Hadn't ye better be dead? Hadn't I better kill ye right here an' bury ye wher ye cain't do no more harm to the family name? But I cain't shoot ye hardly. The same uns raised us an' fed us. I cain't do it; an' I'm sorry I cain't!'"

Yet in his Memorial Day address in Macon, he reveals his forgiving spirit and tender heart.

"I know not a deeper question in our Southern life at this present time than how we shall bear our load of wrong and injury with the calmness and tranquil dignity that become men and women who would be great in misfortune: . . . Why, yonder lies my brave, brilliant friend Lamar, and yonder genial Robert Smith, and yonder generous Tracy—gallant men, all good knights and stainless gentlemen.

"How calmly they sleep in the midst of it.

"Today we are here for love and not for hate. Today we are here for harmony and not for discord. Today we are risen immeasurably above all vengeance. Today standing upon the serene heights of forgiveness, our soul choirs together the enchanting music of harmonious Christian civilization. Today we will not disturb the peaceful slumbers of these sleepers with music less sweet than the serenade of loving remembrances, breaking upon our hearts, as the winds of heaven breathe upon these swaying leaves above us."

Lured by the love of his Christ, "Jesus, Good Paragon, thou Crystal Christ," Lanier rode to the Peabody Institute and played his flute,—his tall, handsome, manly presence, his flute breathing noble sorrows, noble joys and the orchestra softly responding. The audience spell-

bound! He stood, the master genius! All, all for his undying faith that he was in the will of Christ. Sustained through seven years of torture until he had written his immortal fame into American literature, lecturing at Hopkins and collapsing in the cab driving him again home, Lanier had turned his face to the sunrise again,—the sunrise of the plains of fadeless light, and so having dictated his last poem, "Sunrise," upon his bed of exodus, he sings:

"I must pass from thy face, I must pass from the face of the sun. . . .
But I fear not, nay, and I fear not the thing to be done;
I am strong with the light of my Lord the Sun;
How dark, how dark soever the race that must needs be run,
I am lit with the Sun."

Speaking at the Bar Association upon the death of Judge E. A. Nisbet, Lanier pictured his friend in rapture after death:

> "Ah, this tender and eloquent spirit has been already transported into the ravishing companionship of those self-same angels, of whom he then reminded. Yet, I cannot dream that he has gone far. It is not far indeed from here over across death, to the other world. I am confident the waving wings of spirits fan us often and we know it not, and it may be that the spiritual being of our departed friend at this very moment sits here among his brethren of old, smiling kindly at those earthly voices wherewith we endeavor to solace ourselves with his loss."

Lanier, musician of language, sustained to the perfect day of a triumphant faith, never more completely proves his supreme passion or more sweetly captivates the affections of posterity than in his crowning Crystal Christ. After cataloging briefly the weaknesses of Sweetest Shakespeare, Father Homer, Socrates, Buddha, the beautiful Dante, Milton, brave Aeschylus, à Kempis, Epictetus, rapt Behmen, Swedenborg, o'ertopping Langley,

Caedman, Emerson most wise, Keats and Tennyson, he cries:

"All, all I pardon, ere 'tis asked,
Your more or less, your little mole that marks
You brother and your kinship seals to man.

"But Thee, but Thee, O Sovereign Seer of Time,
But Thee, O poet's Poet, Wisdom's Tongue,
But Thee, O man's best Man, O Love's best love,
O perfect life in perfect labor writ,
O all men's Comrade, Servant, King or Priest—
What if or yet, what mole, what flaw, what lapse,
What least defect or shadow of defect,
What rumor, tattled by an enemy,
Of inference loose, what lack of grace
Even in torture's grasp, or sleep's or death's,—
Oh, what amiss may I forgive in Thee,
Jesus, Good Paragon, thou Crystal Christ?"

XI

GOD'S DEPENDENCE ON MAN

A Missionary Sermon

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Matthew 17: 27: That take, and give unto them for me and thee (and the context).

The Bible represents God as a seeking God. The first chapters of Genesis represent man as a guilty sinner, hiding from his own sin. They represent God as seeking man—not merely to condemn him and drive him with a flaming sword from Eden, but they represent God seeking man to announce to him his marvelous mercy and to declare to him the magnificent possiblities of a redeemed soul; "it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." The last chapter of Revelation closes with a song of the seeking God. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Jesus never met with antagonism to his ministry so long as his ministry was provincial, and local, and confined. He first met opposition when he called Matthew, a despised publican, to be his disciple. This opposition burst into a flame of frenzy when he declared to his disciples that universal invitation to men: "He that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Certain of his disciples from that time went away, to follow him no more, and Jesus with pathos said to the Twelve, "and will ye also go away?"

In the passage before us, Jesus sees the inevitable; the shadow of the Cross looms on his vision and he cries, "The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men and they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again." Jesus has accepted the ultimate issue, and with splendid manliness sets his face to Jerusalem. Now comes the incident of the tribute money. Jesus says to Peter, "I am going to Jerusalem to die, the deeds which I have done I do no more, that which I have ministered I minister no more, I commit it to you. That service which I rendered, I render no more. I leave you to serve in my stead. Go to the sea and cast a hook and take the fish that first cometh up and thou shalt find in his mouth a piece of money, that take and give unto them for me and thee."

A Seeking Christ and a Seeking Church

Jesus had announced himself as a seeking Christ. He had gone to give up his life for men. He had turned to a disciple with divine dependence; henceforth Peter and the Twelve and the myriad hosts are to be the takers and the givers of what he had come to bring.

The early church was apparently a failure after Pentecost until the conversion of Paul. Heresies had come in, widows were neglected, and even after the death of Stephen the apostles remained at home, while the other disciples were scattered abroad. It was when Paul saw his vision splendid and proved not disobedient thereto, and like a firebrand flaming with a new missionary zeal, pushed his way into Asia Minor and Greece, and Rome, and into all of the discovered world—then, and then only did Christianity become a world-wide force in the mould-

ing of the nations of its day. The early church had become a seeking church.

So long, my dear friends, as the church of the living God remains magnificent in its quiescent splendor, it has a name to live, but it has also a death to die. But when the church, vitalized, shall have learned to project itself into the life of our cities and our states and into God's great world—in short, when the church has fulfilled God's expectation toward her, and has become a seeking host, its conquest is as boundless in its possibilities as the amazing grace of God.

All Missions Have a Common Center

The missionary idea is a concentric one. From its common center go out many circumferences of expression. There is the circumference of city missions, the circumference of state missions, the circumference of home missions, the circumference of foreign missions. At the center of them all lies a redeemed heart seeking to bring other men to its Redeemer.

That man is an ill-balanced believer who is sending the gospel to the African negro and is not keenly sensitive to the need of the soul of the negro that grooms his horse. He is not a missionary at all, even in spirit; he is a faddist. The woman who believes greatly in gathering a gift box for the almost fabled frontier, yet who has never told, with tears, to another woman the story of the priceless purchase that saved her own soul from sin, has missed the central truth that lies at the heart of the missionary propaganda. He who lives always in the Holy City in raptures and dreams, and lives so he forgets to help beat out the red lights of its underworld, and to teach his foreign neighbor about his Christ, has

poor chance of entrance at all through the gates of pearl.

So God is divinely dependent upon the redeemed to tell the story of redemption to the unredeemed. Angels cannot tell it; they have no experimental knowledge of its beauteous bounties. God does not tell it, for he has ordained that by the foolishness of preaching men shall hear it. To the redeemed it is given to tell the story of the saving grace of God.

The Material; The Motive; The Method

In the beautiful miracle of the temple tribute incident Jesus sets forth the material, the motive, and the method of the missionary enterprise. The coin in the fish's mouth was given by power divine—the material. The motive was "for me and thee"; and the method was that of the redeemed Peter, "taking and giving unto them."

He who would follow the missionary program of Jesus must get his material from God, his motive must be manward and Godward, and in his evangelizing he must begin by telling his good story to the man that lies next his hand.

The Great Resource

The great resource of the missionary enterprise is the grace of God. The grace of God is that which we possess for which we have paid nothing. You have laid hold upon character until it is resplendent and rare, but you purchased it ever so dearly by disciplines and renunciations and denials. You have climbed far up the high way of learning, but what a price you have paid! By long hours of toil, and laborious plodding you have attained heights in the intellectual realm. But, beloved, you and I never turned our hands to save our souls and

we never paid a penny to have our names written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind but now I see."

Mr. Jowett has said that "the grace of God is that which pours itself out upon the unlovely and makes the unlovely, lovely." How true it is. How great is the grace of God—pouring itself out upon the unlovely, making it lovely; pouring itself out upon the impure, making it pure; crowning with a diadem of holiness wrecked and wretched man.

And we have a resource in money. It was a coin that Jesus gave to Peter. The money which we have is God-given material for the missionary enterprise. The South is at a greater peril today than during the Civil War. We are on the hazardous highway of wealth. Southern Baptists are getting rich at the rate of one and one half billion dollars a year. Last year we gave one-fortieth of our increase to the God who gave it to us. At a banquet held recently in a flourishing Southern city thirteen millionaires sat down; eleven years ago they were all poor men. Pittsburgh prospered and money grew faster than morals. Many of their old God-fearing families have been wrecked by degenerate sons.

"So you see," they said to Thomas Aquinas, in the counting room of the Vatican, "the church does not have to longer say, 'Silver and gold have I none.' "

"And neither," said Aquinas, "can the church say, 'Take up thy bed and walk!' "

And what a resource do we have in our men! Every boy at college, every girl at school, every mountain pos-

sibility, every wondrous-eyed lad and every dreaming girl, furnish for the missionary enterprise the chance to meet the divine dependence upon us to take that which God has given us and give unto them "for me and thee."

The Mission Motive

And what shall the motive be? "For me and thee." The savability of man, and the sovereignty of God, the love of man and the love of God.

That is a very simple motive. Let us not make it complex with glamour. Do we believe in the possibilities of men as Jesus believed in their possibilities? There was no man so unattractive but that he was attractive to Jesus. There was no woman so soiled at heart but that Jesus could lift her into a clean life. Horace sung, "I hate the vulgar crowd," but Jesus had compassion upon it. "What a city to sack!" cried the great general, but Jesus wept over Jerusalem. The men with whom Judas bargained sneered at his broken heart as he sought an honest confession, but Jesus even in the garden called him "Friend."

Poor bruised, broken, blighted, blasted humanity, after all has no friend but the Nazarene! All other teachers grow tired of their drudgeries and dullness and dross, but Jesus with a bleeding heart seeks them in their vagrancies, heals their lacerated wounds, and turns their tired and spent wanderings into the path where soft moss-roses grow and where the meadowland is luxuriant with tender grass.

The black man that is lynched by the mob is my erring brother, not so far different from my own errant heart after all, and as he hangs, having paid the penalty for his inexcusable outrage, I am sad at the sin of my

brother. Whatever man did lose by the fall, he did not lose his responsibility to God, nor did he forfeit God's responsibility for him. It must be always remembered that, though man was made of the dust, in the process of making he passed through divine hands.

There is no grasping Jew, no opium-smoking Chinaman, no anarchistic Italian, no shackled Negro in the purlieus of our cities, or walking the ranges of this land or his native land, but that it is he for whom Jesus came, and it is because we love men that Jesus bids us give ourselves in the missionary enterprise.

> "All that I could not be,
> All that men ignored in me,
> This was I worth to God."

And "for me!" Do we love him? Have you and I clarified our motive? Is it all for him? Dr. Lee was a Chinese Christian who had gone to Mukden to have the cataracts taken from his eyes. When the Boxer outrages arose he was led into the temple to renounce the Jesus-way. They made him kneel. "If you do not renounce your faith we will cut off your ears," they said, and the humble fellow answered, "I cannot"; and they cut his ears from his head. "Then we will cut off your nose," they said the second time, and he being true, they cut off his nose. "If you do not renounce we will put out those eyes you are so proud of." "I will not deny," said the faithful Dr. Lee, and both eyes were put out with sharp swords. "If you do not renounce we will cut off your head," and with the blood streaming down his face, the transfigured convert began ever so gently to sing:

> "My Jesus, I love Thee; I know Thou art mine,
> For Thee all the follies of sin I resign."

And so singing his own requiem, they severed his head from his body—"That take and give unto them for me—and thee." Do you and I love Jesus Christ supremely? Are we willing ourselves to give his gift of redemption to any man at any cost?

"Oh," said Dr. Denney to a missionary back from his labors, "I wish the church at home was more interested in foreign missions." "How can you expect them to be?" returned his friend; "they are not interested in Jesus Christ at home."

The Method of Jesus

So then, what is the method of Jesus for the missionary enterprise? It is just the simple method of the burning heart setting on fire the unredeemed. All that is needed to rehabilitate the broken earthenware of this world for a satisfied Saviour is just to have an awakened church—just to have every man who has confessed Jesus as "my Lord and my God" to be on fire, to touch with the sacred flame another life.

Our cities will be Holy Cities when every preacher gets on fire to bring the consuming flame of God's gospel into his city. When every preacher gets a passion for his city, there will be a fire such as will light up the all-extending heavens. To sweep the alleys with a purifying flame, burning the sin, revealing the shame, subduing the unsurrendered, that is the method of Jesus in city missions. When God wanted to express himself to man he came in the incarnated Word, his dependency was in Jesus, his Son, to get the world to understand him better. So today we are called to be the reincarnation of that Word which has been wrought in us until we come to

what Paul meant when he said that Christ "is formed in us." Thus the divine dependence.

"You tell me a man is a good man," said Mazzini, the emancipator of Italy, "and I say, how many souls has he saved? If anyone shows me a religious nation, I ask, what has it done to bring others to its faith?"

Thus The Light Spreads

John Wesley left England as a foreign missionary to Georgia. He spent two years laboring, with no apparent success. He returned home; he found a rich experience of grace in his personal salvation in a Moravian church, and then, in the homeland, he went about flaming, blazing, shining, face to face, hand to hand, heart to heart, until the mightiest transformation which England has ever known sprang up. God's method was a glowing heart. Was it not Robert Simpson who said, "When I shall stand before the throne I shall be a miserable sinner saved by grace, but when I shall begin to tell the story of my redemption the angels shall stand in awful silence. And their harps shall hang mute in their hands."

So the fire will burn. It will continue to shine and spread until the fire is kindled on the hills and plains of our beautiful Southland and shall become a burden upon our hearts, until it shall be lighted with that light which came to lighten men.

The fire will burn with a splendid continuity. The flame will not leap from your village pulpit to the Sandwich Islands at a bound. It will certainly reach to the Sandwich Islands and girdle the globe, but it will take new flames according to the divine method—Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria—the uttermost parts.

Foreign Missions and Home Missions Inter-Dependent

Domenico Scalero told this story at the Baptist Congress in Philadelphia. He and Dr. Stuart, while in Italy, were attacked by a mob of Romanists and were in peril of death. He sought protection from the Italian authorities but he could secure none. He then appealed to the United States Minister in Rome. He claimed protection because about a dozen of the members of that Baptist church in Bisaccia, in Italy, had been converted and joined the church while in the United States and on returning to Italy had united with his church, though they were still American citizens, and through that plea his church was protected. There are as many foreigners in Atlanta as there are Baptists. One of the methods of reaching the foreign field is by reaching the home citizens with the fire.

When Mrs. Howard Taylor had left behind her English home and had left the city of Naples, the ship's captain shouted, "Full steam, straight ahead." She clutched to her heart the last letter from her mother, whom she little expected to see again. There came over her an insufferable loneliness and solitude, but out from the Great Unknown there came a figure; it was the image of Jesus, saying, "Here, my own child, this take and give unto them for me and thee."

When Patteson had gone to the South Sea Islanders and thrice had plunged beneath the waves to escape their poisoned arrows, at last he fell struck to death. The sea waves washed his body ashore and the conscience-stricken natives set him adrift at sea in an open boat with a palm branch of victory on his bosom. Why

did Patteson go? Because at Eton College, years before, Jesus had come and said, "This take and give unto them for me and thee." And Livingstone dead, kneeling beside his couch with his great noble head in his hands at prayer, leaving a message to the world, "God's blessings on any man who helps heal Africa's open sore." Livingstone had taken and given for Christ and men!

So the divine dependence is upon you and me—God waits for us to make our city a new city, our South a new South, our America a new America, the world the Kingdom of Christ. Shall we prove recreant? Shall we give ourselves and all that we are, and all that we have and all that we hope to be? I am sure we shall, shall we not?

XII

THE ESCAPE OF JESUS

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THE ESCAPE OF JESUS

Luke 4: 30: But he passing through the midst of them went his way.

Jesus went his way, because his way was not their way. Jesus gently pleads for the companionship of all men, but when they cast him out, he passing through the midst of them goes his way.

One of the most charming experiences which a man may have is to go back home. To go back to the leaping waters of the roads and harbors. I can see the little sail boat now, caught in a squall—the tang of the salt air sweeps into my imagination—the gunwales of the sail boat is now a-wash, the halyards strain, the helm is turned to the limit to point into the teeth of the storm. There is the laughter of the boys upon a venture, the cawing of the sea gulls with wide wings outracing the winds—now in a trough of the waters—then upon the crest of a high wave with the spray cutting into the sailor's face, as the cat-boat outrides the raging waters and scampers home.

The ringing of the schoolhouse bell; the fresh smell of pine woods and the faces that once we knew now come again to our vision. The conflict of leaving home and returning to his neighbors already had seized Jesus as afresh it thrills each of us through and through as we go back along the silent trails that bring us again to the forks in the road.

"The sea is forever quivering,
The shore forever still,
And the boy that is born in a sea-coast town
Is born with a dual will:
The sun-burned rocks and beaches
Inveigle him to stay;
While every wave that breaches
Is a nudge to be up and away."

"And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up." There was the well out of which, with Mary, he had drawn the household supply of water, and on the sabbath he went to the synagogue, and stood up for to read. And he, with princely grace, read from the scroll upon which was written the words of Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised. To preach the acceptable year of the Lord." And we are told the eyes of all of them were fastened on him—What eyes would not have gazed, what ears would not have listened; what minds that would not wonder, here was a lad—a fellow-townsman of theirs — of the humble craft of a carpenter, announcing to them boldly that he was the Anointed Messiah for which they longed with rapture. Here again was re-enacted the old story of the peasant's son come to power—Lincoln did it and he died a martyr; Joan of Arc rose from her shepherd's home to crown the Dauphin King, but she ascended in a chariot of fire—And they were angry and cried, "Is not this Joseph's son?" And rushing him headlong they would have cast him out, but Jesus escaped out of their hands, and "passing through the midst of them, went his way." And Jesus went his way because his way was not their way.

Nazareth had a poor reputation before they drove Jesus away; but how destitute and desolate and vile must have been the city after Jesus had left. One of the most interesting experiences I ever had was a visit to the Mamertinus Carcer—the Mamertine Prison—which lies at the foot of the Roman forum. We descended into the first prison, and wending our way down damp, slimy stone steps, we came to the circular room where the apostles, Peter and Paul, had been once in prison; and the tower sewer, leading into the city's refuse system was cut through the stone, and the room was damp and dark and dismal and drear and dull and depressing and desolate and deserted. Once it had rung with the voices of prisoners, and now it was silent and dead as a tomb!

But how infinitely worse is a heart out of which Jesus has been cast. We are little concerned, in this far-off age, with the escape of Jesus from the unworthy city of Nazareth; but we are dealing with hearts out of which Jesus has been cast. The great tragedy of life, after all, is the tragedy of human hearts: hearts that are broken; hearts that are burdened; hearts that are blighted; hearts betrayed; bleeding hearts; brooding hearts; bothered hearts; bowed hearts; songless and soulless and without a Saviour.

I am not now speaking of falling from grace. I am speaking of the life and the heart out of which Jesus Christ, who may have once reigned supreme, has been cast. I believe if a man is once saved, he is saved forever. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out

of my Father's hand." If a man is ever born he cannot be unborn. Sam Jones said: "The difference between the Baptist and the Methodist is just this—The Methodist has got religion, but he is afraid all of the time he will lose it. The Baptist is sure he can never lose it, but he is scared to death lest he has not got it."

Those of us who are preachers run always the chance of casting out our Christ. We are going through the forms, but we have lost our fire. We are defending our creeds, but we have lost the certainty of our Christ. We are going through the routine, but we have lost the passion of preaching about our royal Master. You cast Christ out when you circulate a scandal about your neighbor. You cast out Christ when prosperity brings an increase in your salary, without a corresponding increase in your gifts to the Lord. A deacon who prays loud in a prayer meeting, and is a sorrow to everybody in his home, long, long ago has cast Christ to the precipice of his life and Jesus has gone.

I am speaking of Christian lives that have lost their usefulness; lives that five years, ten years ago offered hospitality to Jesus when he came upon a visit to their hearts. They welcomed him with songs, and they invited their friends to meet their guest; but the passing show has crowded so many new figures into our lives, and, gradually, we have cast out our Christ, and he, ignored, injured, snubbed, passing through the midst of our lives, has gone on his way. First, we lost our hospitality, and then we lost our heartiness, and now, we have developed a hostility to him. Follow the advice of that good Methodist revivalist and draw a ring around yourself and clean up everything in that ring, if you expect the old

joy and the gladness and the power of your Christian life ever to come back.

Perhaps the most unhappy man in all the world is the man who is trying to keep up appearances with nothing to keep his appearance on. I visited a home in proud old Virginia, a family out of which had come one of the most distinguished men, in some respects, in the South. I was invited to dinner. Oilcloth was on the table where linen had been. Benches were beside the table where chairs had been. Old clothes were in the window where panes of glass had been—and my meal was a tragic one, because of the pitiable attempt to keep up appearances. "Let me cease to practice for a single day," cried the great musician, "and I will know it. Let me cease for two days, and my friends will know it. Let me cease for three days, and the whole world will know that I have lost something in my touch."

How miserable is the man who is trying to keep up friendships with the world, and keep up the appearances of a happy heart when he is a spiritual bankrupt. Jesus was happy to leave Nazareth, because they tried to cast him out. Christ today experiences a sense of relief when some of those who once called him "friend" bring him to the very edge of their life, and by their colorless Christian lives would hurl him down headlong. "He passing through the midst of them goes his way," because his way was not their way.

Christ Escapes from the Hostile Heart

Nazareth pushed Jesus to the wall and he was glad to escape out of the hands of his friends. Had he been first in their hearts he need not have left. The heart is the

thing that settles the abiding place of Jesus. They drove him out of the city because first they had driven him out of their lives.

It was the critical spirit that caused his escape. Indifference, grown sour and bitter; neglect of religion, grown into a habit, had left fretful, unsatisfied hearts, and the critical spirit was the spirit of Nazareth. They questioned his parents, they snubbed him for his birth, they leered at him because he was a native son, he was one of them and so must be like them, and they would not have him speak of his exalted mission. The church has beaten the back of Jesus with the critical spirit and left him scourged and bleeding again. Twenty-five per cent of church members never show a semblance of interest in the Kingdom of Christ. They do not care. Neglect has rusted the hinges of the heart and he knocks on the outside. The ministry sometimes is bluffing rather than bleeding. "I am afraid we will win the war without sacrifice," was the word of the War President, Woodrow Wilson. We are running on our momentum, and we can run a long time, but the tragedy of it all is that we are running down hill.

They judged Jesus by standards of the world. He was poor. His family was poor. They knew his father. They had few possessions. What if he spoke "gracious words"? Did he not make yokes for their oxen? He still escapes from the hearts which have made money their god. Possessions was their requirement of Jesus to make him great—but Christ came to make a kingdom of the pure in heart.

Mr. John Stone was a layman of gentle spirit and of good worldly possessions. He visited a noted financier of

Canada, and on the completion of their business his Canadian friend said to him,

"Mr. Stone, sit down. Have you a wife?"

"Yes," replied Mr. Stone. "But why do you ask me that?"

"Go home," he said, "and treat her right. Last week I buried my wife. I lost her fifteen years ago. Fifteen years ago I vowed to be the richest man in Canada, and now that is what they say of me. But I put my money ahead of the many things that one cannot buy. I would forget birthdays. I would forget anniversaries. I neglected the amenities of companionship. And I saw my wife wither, and last week she faded and I am left alone with money and I am miserable. Go home, Mr. Stone, and preserve the spiritual values of your home life."

They had forgotten the Power from on high which filled Jesus. When the church begins to look for natural meanings in the parentage of Jesus, he passes through the midst of them and goes his way. His mother was overshadowed by the Highest. They scorned this virgin's claim to rejoice in being the Handmaiden of the Eternal, and Jesus left them. Jesus had told them that the Spirit of the Lord was upon him, anointing him, sending him off in ministry, setting him to preach with power.

Not Napoleon but the Maid of Orleans inspired the fighting soldiers of France; in the World War, not William the Second's dream of World Power but Martin Luther's justification by faith is Germany's real greatness.

Covering the little hut of Francis of Assisi is the pretentious Cathedral cold and rich. But the pilgrims bow before the hut in reverence of power from on high that possessed the sweet spirit of the wandering preacher of

Umbria aud the chilly reverberations of droning, mumbling incantations impress the poor in spirit that Jesus has passed through the midst of the Cathedral and he is gone.

Christ Kept in the Hospitable Heart

They may have kept Jesus. Every stone about him he loved with devotion. These were his friends. The open doorway of a hospitable heart is the crowning quest of Christ. Had they offered him their hands he would have clasped them in true friendship. But they would have hurled him over the stones down to death, and he escaped out of their hostile hands. Nazareth missed the chance of first claiming the World's Messiah. They could have as easily kept Christ in Nazareth.

When a man finds God's plan for his life, Christ abides. They missed the central truth of the Scriptures, that he should be called a Nazarene. God's plan for their city was missed entirely. "For to this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world" had shot entirely over their heads. God's providence in the individual life is proven by ten thousand testimonies, and this rich experience of Fatherly care and leadership nurtures the presence of Christ himself in the hospitable heart.

I was making an address in a little village of Georgia and it chanced to be in the church of a few hundred members from which a United States Senator, Walter George, had just gone out, and the pastor told me he would be inducted into office in the next few minutes in the Nation's Capitol. We went to a little classroom where the Senator had from week to week taught a Bible class of young women, and we prayed together that the life now being inducted into honorable office should be planned by the Spirit of God.

On leaving his class the Senator had been presented with a Bible by his devoted pupils and he said with deep emotion, "Young ladies, you have given me the best of gifts, and the best of books. Years ago someone else gave me a Bible. My mother presented me with a Bible as I left my country home to make my way in the world, and she said to me, 'Walter, I do not care especially that you become a rich man, or that you become a famous man, but I want you to be a good man.' On this Book I stake my chance of being the good man my mother wanted me to be."

The humble recognition that a plan for one's life runs all the way from Bethlehem through Nazareth to Calvary insures the abiding Christ.

Simple faith alone overcomes religious pride and offers reception to Jesus into the heart. Too much befuddling simple faith with intellectual trickery has been the weakness of ecclesiastical history. Academic phrasing, ghastly in withered pretense, has driven Christ to his escape a thousand times from the schoolrooms of the church. Simple faith in his Cross makes Christianity a vital faith in the last analysis. So they made him escape because they refused to heed "that this scripture is fulfilled today in your ears." A metropolitan preacher had met with great success in the smaller city which he had left, and after the lapse of one year a former hearer came on a visit and cherished the chance of hearing another inspirational message from the heart of her heaven-filled preacher. A great church, great trappings, great stiff people, and the sermon: full-phrased words—thoughtful and earth-born and smooth and meaningless—and she returned home to throw herself across her bed and cry out, "He is gone, the prophet is dead—his heart is stolen

—pride of prosperity has stifled the passion for Christ, Jesus is gone!" His face was changed, his voice—Christ had escaped.

Had they looked for the Returning Christ, he would not have escaped. Nazareth never saw Jesus again, but some day Nazareth will witness his coming to the earth again—in glory of triumph.

On a day of March in the Southland, when spring was coming back "with rustling shade," my wife announced to me that she was to be a patient in the hospital in a few days for a terrible operation, and she said, "Promise me you will stand by me all the way." Of course I promised to be there when she came from under the deadening anesthetic. She was gone two hours, and she came back unconscious—and to me—she had left—she had gone—and I waited the long moments for her to return—anxious were the hours, but at last from the nebulous world of sleep she caught the sense of a sound and spoke through suffering lips, "I hear him, he is here!"

Yes, I was there, waiting, and watching, and ready, thank God, when she came back. I had kept my tryst.

And some day, towards the lightened heavens, I hope to have an upturned face when Jesus returns to earth!

XIII

IS IT WRONG TO DO RIGHT ON SUNDAY?

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IS IT WRONG TO DO RIGHT ON SUNDAY?

Mark 2: 27, 28: The sabbath was made for man and not man for the sabbath, so that the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath.

No question is so easily debatable as the question of conduct. Is it wrong to drink if it does not enslave me? Is it wrong to play cards with a trifle as a stake? Is it wrong to dance, or to smoke, or to become very definite, "Is it wrong to do right on Sunday?"

Two elements must be considered—first, is the amusement right or wrong of itself, and then, is it right or wrong in its relations? Was it wrong for soldiers to play dice in the battery streets in our army camps? Well, right or wrong, nobody bothered because it was a rough crowd and a rough place and a disordered time. But was it right for soldiers to roll dice on Jesus' seamless garment at the very foot of the Cross on which a sinless, loving Saviour was purchasing a world's redemption? I must say I have always thought, had I the chance, my righteous wrath would have compelled me to crusade against that sacrilege. The place—the time—the occasion, does make a difference.

I have never in my life laid down any law to govern anybody's conduct. I do not believe that this is the method of Jesus in his teaching. I put my hand to the task as a preacher in laying out the great principles

which govern life and then leave to the individual what his conduct shall be.

This question of golf, for instance, naturally divides into two different questions, "Is it wrong to play golf?" and, "Is it wrong to play golf on Sunday?" I answer very emphatically that the man who sins by neglecting the play-part of his life is just as guilty of breaking the principle of right living as the man who breaks the sabbath day by failing to keep it holy. The duty of play is as much a part of Christian, wholesome living as the duty to pray. Each has its just place in the proper development of any man. But the real question which bothers us all is what we ought to do and what we ought not to do in seeking to observe the proper sanctity of the sabbath day.

I haven't any right to direct the conduct of a man who denies the power of Christianity in his own life, but I have everything to do with setting the claims of the Master of Christianity before any man who humbly acknowledges his gratitude for the mercy of God in his own life, and to the acknowledged Christian man this question really becomes a vital one. You might teach the whole world to become expert golfers, but the world would not be one whit the better world if this is all you taught them; but you can teach one man to refuse to play golf on Sunday because he seeks the highest possible influence he might have over the lives of other men for good, and that one decision has made the world a better world. It is one thing in life to do what you "blame please" and quite another to ask whether God or man has a claim to any consideration in anything you do.

The Sabbath is the Day of Deity

The Ten Commandments are still as fundamental as the virtue of woman. God set aside the sabbath as a day of rest, to be observed as a commemoration of Israel's deliverance from Egypt. The old sabbath, which stoned a man for picking up sticks on Sunday, is forever abolished by Jesus, the founder of Christianity. "Let no man judge you in meat; or in drink; or in respect to an holiday; or of a new moon, or of the sabbath days; which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ" (Colossians 2: 16, 17).

The Scotch have always been careful to keep the sabbath. The story is told of two Scotch women who were discussing the summer court of their beloved Queen Victoria, which was for the while in the hills of Scotland.

"And what do ye think o' the queen?"

"She's very fine, but I do not know about her lords and ladies. They drive their carriages around the lochs on the sabbath, ye know."

"Yes," answered the second, "but ye remember Jesus and his disciples plucked the ears of corn on the sabbath, as they went through the fields."

"Yes, I know," the first answered, "but I never thought any more of him for doing it either."

It is possible to observe so strictly the old sabbath that the Christian conception and content and freedom of Jesus is overlooked entirely. The old day is gone, according to Paul, but its spiritual content is preserved.

Our age has not yet advanced beyond the fundamental moral demands of the Ten Commandments. There run throughout that decalogue the presence of the authority

of God and the principle of the protest against man's transgressing the rights of either God or man or himself.

If a man has broken one of the Commandments, which stand as a unit of protest against trespassing upon God —or man, or self, he has broken the spirit of the right of sovereignty of God. That the God of Eden was in his sovereign right when he forbade "eating of the fruit of the single tree," I recognize without a qualm.

God has rights that cannot be avoided in this question of the sabbath. His concern for tired men who need rest; his knowledge of the need of a working world to preserve its integrity for efficient labor, aye, his very sovereignty and right to preserve one of the golden days in seven as a monument to his mercy to man, and his right to hedge man about with that limitation by which his kinship to God is cultivated and nourished and fostered; these are the inalienable rights of Jehovah. The simple parable of the village parson who walked through the commons on a sabbath day and observed the village boys at baseball play, puts the rights of God directly. He gathered the boys about him with the pledge of a good story. "Once there was a rich man hailed by a traveler and petitioned for alms. The kindly rich man gave him six silver dollars, reserving the single dollar left to pay his carfare to complete a distant journey. When he had given the six dollars the beggar clubbed the philanthropist, and took from him his last dollar." The boys were in disgust and offered themselves to find the miscreant. "Well," said the parson, "God has given you six days for work and toil and provision for the body, and now you knock him down and rob him of the seventh day. Isn't one day his day by right?"

Responsibility is Individual

I will say in the first approach to an answer that all of us must recognize the emancipating principle of individual responsibility and freedom in determining one's own ethical standards. The hurtling motor on a smooth speedway leaping along at one hundred miles per hour would say to the high powered touring car: "You seem to me to limp along." The fast touring car would laugh at the simple runabout, and say, "You are standing still," and yet the slow-moving runabout would say to the creeping hand cart, "You have reversed, it seems to me, you are going backwards." Thus ever has the individual claimed the right of setting his standards of speed. Much will depend upon his own rate of speed, his own ideals, his own environ of crowded street or smooth speedway, and much will depend upon the presence or absence of the hand of the law as to what will determine his momentary attitude and upon our many-sided experiences and idealisms, and tutelages, and life's purpose and duties, and on our conception of the higher laws will rest our answer to the question, "Is it wrong to play golf on Sunday?"

The idling native of our Philippine Island thinks his standard of life quite good, but in his tribe no word could be found for "soap" or "virtue." If the higher ideals of cleanliness and purity were current conceptions with him, doubtless his civilization would change its type.

One man will say, "In other days in the countryside I hated a game of chance, but now in the city I see no harm. I was wont in the village to attend the church with clock-like precision; now I play golf instead." Has

nothing been lost from the life, have ideals that were the best now become bruised reeds?

Qualifications to Liberty

When Jesus cried, "The sabbath is made for man, not man for the sabbath," he broke the binding thongs that tied the hands of religion and gave man the right to lift his fallen ox out of the ditch on the sabbath, and challenged the world of mercy to show mercy on the sabbath day whether the letter of the law was written against the deed or not. But the bill of independence which Jesus gave to man was qualified by that appended phrase, "Therefore, the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath." Jesus' argument here is that his is the right to reserve the judgment and standards of what men observe to do on the sabbath day. In granting liberty to man in his use of the sabbath, Jesus did not grant him license. In untethering the hands of the lifeless law of the sabbath day, Jesus in no wise put into those free hands the firebrand of recklessness and riot. After every question is put, "Is it wrong?" "Is it wrong?" the answer can never lie without the pale of the right of sovereignty of the Son of man over every pleasure and over every question of sabbath keeping. One has said, "If you fail to keep sin out of all your pleasures, God will not fail to take all pleasure out of your sin." In answering my question, "Is it wrong to play golf on Sunday?" I desire to offer these aids to answer the question. First, God has rights in the sabbath question; second, society has rights in the matter; and, third, self-efficiency has a claim to consideration.

Dr. Morrison has a great sentence which lays out the principle and the freedom of the sabbath. "If we are members of Christ, then we have a duty to the world. All things are lawful, but all things are not expedient sometimes in the interest of safety. All things are lawful, but all things are not expedient sometimes in the interest of our brother. All things are lawful, but all things are not expedient, because around us there is a Christless world, and men with poor, blind eyes are judging Christ by what they see in his professing people."

The Question of Efficiency

Croesus with his hoarded wealth would be ostracized in America today. Our age demands that wealth be gotten to be distributed again, that one who is gifted with high abilities must pursue knowledge and science to offer a moiety of his talented possessions to other men, and that when one seeks his pleasures he at least remembers that poorer men, and more unselfish men, and men of higher idealisms of life than he, have a right to consideration as he solves the sabbath question. Cried the long silent heathen, "Nothing which has to do with the rights of man is foreign to me."

It is significant that when the question of closing the moving picture places of London was agitated a few years past, one of the foremost to protest was Harry Lauder, because he said this means the later opening of the music halls and theaters and the giving of a seven days' work for a six days' pay. As a member of St. Peter's Presbyterian Church of London, Mr. Lauder had discerned the unbridled greed of the six-nighter who desired to satiate his silly selfishness with seven nights of empty mirth.

Horses who drag heavy burdens seven days in the week are proven less efficient in the long record of their usefulness than those that rest on the sabbath. Flowers to bloom with the richest blend of color are never the forced flowers which lose the mastering hand of the artist in the quieting shadows of the night. Kernels of grain are pithy and unfit when under an artificial light and over stimulating phosphates they leap to the heights of horticultural freaks. That growing youth that never rests, that never quiets himself on a sabbath day, enters upon the duties of his office with unsteady hand and slowly deteriorating chances of reaching the best prizes in the race for commercial goals. When candles are burned at both ends, soon the light has become darkness. The efficiency of one's self demands rest.

It has been proven by many nations, Chaldean, Greek, Roman, and French, that rest every ten days is ruinous to the race, and they all came back to the seventh day. Man loses one-sixth more energy every day than he makes up in sleep, and on Saturday he has lost six-sixths, or one unit of energy, and if he does not rest one day in seven to restore the supply of energy lost, he is actually losing out in health, is the scientific conclusion of Professor Haegler.

The Question of the Highest

My whole message to you is to insist that you make this negative question, "Is it wrong to play golf on Sunday?" a positive one, and fling into my face this question, "Is it right to play golf on Sunday?" That is the call of the highest manliness, a call to the positive issues of life. It is of very little account whether it is wrong to

drink, or to gamble, or to dance, or to throw the brakes wide open on the sabbath day, but it is a vital question of your manhood, and of your surviving influence, and the moral and spiritual deposit you make on your age as to whether or not you have cast your life into the cleaner atmosphere and uncompromising heights of life. The man who starts out on a program of pleasure to suit his own desires, who stifles unselfishness and "petrifies his feelings" will not hear the words of wise counsel; but if one seeks the road that leads to imperishable usefulness and ungarnished service to man and finds rocks of self-denial or the sense of obligation to his world of brothers hindering him, he is a brave man that undiscourageably climbs on.

The question is not at all whether it is right or wrong to play golf on Sunday, the real question is, "Have I started in the game of life to play the man and play it big?"

Jane Addams tells of a young girl in a Chicago school whose hands were always soiled. Her teacher would insist each morning that her hands be washed clean to start the work of the day. On Easter a white lily was brought into the room and the glad children of the slums, charmed at its fragile beauty, gathered about it with permission to touch its petals. But when the little girl of the soiled hands started to touch the white lily she cried, "O teacher, I must wash my hands first." If the purity and the possessing personality of "the Son of man, the Lord of the sabbath" is clearly discerned, vitalizing the conscience of man, one can easily answer for himself the question, "Is it wrong to play golf on Sunday?" or, "Is it right?"

XIV

THE TRIUMPHANT TEAR AT THE GATES OF HEAVEN

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THE TRIUMPHANT TEAR AT THE GATES OF HEAVEN

(*What Happens the First Five Minutes After Death?*)

Revelation 21: 4: And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Revelation 21: 21: Every several gate was of one pearl.

When I left New York Harbor for my first European visit, I noticed that the first day out found me thinking of home, of those I had left behind. So strangely did these thoughts seize upon me that a homesickness more troublesome to me than the constantly threatening sickness of the sea was present with me ever.

About mid-ocean I had lost myself in the life of the shipboard. There were friendships from all over America and the ends of the earth, which I had newly formed; there were the scintillant icebergs moving majestically in the sun, games were to play, and the sea with its varied charms called to me in "whispers wild and sweet."

The last days of the voyage were days when my imagination ran ranging all over the lands I was about to visit for the first time in my life. I pictured great naves and shadowy aisles of hoary cathedrals with their story of song and glory. I wondered about the towering Alps and the glistening glaciers, and strange peoples and quaint tongues held me enthralled as I put all my mind upon the world toward which I fast was ap-

proaching and which now would be my temporary home for a few months.

So it is with the voyage of life. Loved ones in the early years are our keenest centers of affection, and then the full middle life which summons us to lose ourselves in the wheels of commerce and the hum of the vibrant life all about us, charms our eager attention with its sheer pursuit; but then come the declining years of the voyage—just before the old ship moors itself—old age with its fancies and hopes sets its affections upon the other world; heaven draws nearer, and no nobler attraction than the life of loved ones now living in the other world can call our fancies into play. That is why heaven has its magic touch to wipe away the triumphant tear, which reveals to our amazed eyes the wonders of life beyond the grave. My father died with tears in his eyes, glad in his glorious faith, but long, long since God has wiped away all tears from his eyes.

So often I wonder what happens immediately after death, and I think the Bible reveals something of what happens to us. I think immediately upon the moment of death there breaks upon the soul the consciousness that we are living in another and more wonderful world than our most brilliant imaginations ever dreamed. The gates of the city, we are told, will be of a single pearl, and while one pearl of the value of six hundred thousand dollars has been known, it is beyond the realm of the human mind to conceive of a gate of a golden-streeted city made of a single pearl. And the walls are of jasper, with foundations of emerald and topaz and jacinth and many other stones which but carries the human mind further to wonder what its real splendors must be.

Heaven, of course, will be a spiritual realm, but its riches of glory are represented to us in figures of speech describing material magnificence.

"How will it be, I muse when I shall cross
The sunless river? Shall I bear with me
Aught of the vain sweet store of memory,
Or lose it all and know not of my loss?
Shall I remember or let fall as dross
The simple lore of garden and of lea—
What time the wild azalea lures the bee,
When purple violets nestle in the moss?
Shall I remember then the crocus' gold,
The tender flush of flowering orchard trees,
The scent of hayfields and of summer rain?
Fain would I even broken baubles hold—
I were not I, were I bereft of these,
And born anew unknowing joy or pain!"

—*Winston.*

Angels Will Attend

At the moment of death, angels will come as they came to Lazarus and relieve our minds of any embarrassment in the new and strange world of experiences. They will lead us step by step into the unfolding marvels of the green expansions of the heavenly city. Angels are near us at our death to carry us over the unknown venture into the realm of God's eternal existence in the presence of the host of heaven.

Isaiah describes heaven as a temple. He saw the cherubim with wings twain cover their face and fly away from the presence of the brilliant glory of the Almighty which filled the temple of heaven. John, the beloved Apostle, describes heaven as a city where activities are many and varied and constant. Friendships will be much like the spiritual ties of friendships here on earth. The joys, and loves, and sympathies and acquaintances which we know here will be renewed.

I believe the Bible teaches that every friendship has about it the halo of eternity. Mothers will know their children. And husbands will know their wives in the spiritual residuum of their earthly companionships, for it must be remembered that Jesus describes heaven as a home of many mansions which he is preparing for his own people.

Earthly Postponements Renewed

The artists who have failed on earth will finish the unrealized dreams of their genius in another world. They will splash at a ten league canvas with brushes of comets hair, Kipling suggests, and the tasks postponed, the praises unspoken, the plans conceived, the inventions not quite finished will follow their truthful lines to a perfect fruition. We shall understand why there should have been a War Between the States. We will learn the motives which prompted Lincoln and Lee in their respective choices. We shall spend an eon or two in discovering the relative worth of such characters as William, the second Kaiser of Germany, and Edith Cavell, gentle nurse, immortal in her martyrdom.

Sorrows will be understood as the touch of eternity upon the woof of our spiritual growth. Disasters will unravel their mysteries like a tale that is told. Proper appraisals of those whom we knew here below will break through our prejudices into an honest estimate before the tribunal of the God of the things as they are.

The Gates of Heaven

Often the vestibule is an index to the house. Sometimes the very door of a house proclaims the character

of its furnishings. The magnificent temple of Herod had beautiful gates made of costly Corinthian brass, and it shone like the sun in its glory. He who passed through this gate approached nearer the Holy place. The baptistry of San Giovanni in Florence is entered through doors, the portals of which are famous. The eastern gate is by Ghiberti and in the most exquisite bronze bas-relief is molded the master's finest genius. So the gates of heaven give us a glimpse of what lies beyond. "Every several gate was of one pearl." How like a treasure land that sounds to us! How like a fabled paradise which our imaginations have to extend themselves to picture. In the morning when the dull dawn has left and our eyes shall awake in another world, we shall be at the portals, and what a prodigal splendor will meet us as we behold the gates of heaven—each one of a single, perfect pearl! Now it is permitted to us to catch a glimpse of what is within, through heaven's gates. Within the gates is God and where God is, surely heaven is. Wordsworth writes in his *Intimations of Immortality from Childhood,* we are "trailing clouds of glory come from God, who is our home." And upon a blustering storm-riven night, Howard Payne shivered along the streets of Paris. A shaft of light suddenly fell across the falling snow, the door of a happy, humble home had opened to receive the tired father, and with this glimpse of the highest human happiness, Payne, still cold and wet in a garret room, with a genius that has given us our tenderest and sweetest fireside melody, wrote, "Mid pleasures and palaces tho' we may roam. be it ever so humble, there is no place like home." Our home is within the gates—our abiding place is beyond the wall, but through the gates there is a glimpse.

The Gates Are Different

Heaven, as the gates reveal, is a place altogether different from our present conceptions. You and I are put to it when we try to conceive of great gates, each of a single pearl. Imagination spreads its wings, but thus high it cannot fly. Indeed, I should think a gate made of a single pearl were not beautiful at all. It would be ill-proportioned and unfitted to our architectural sense. So heaven is to be revealed to us and its secrets known, but how infinitely different from our present work-a-day conceptions. The length and height and breadth of the city are equal. The streets are to be of pure gold, clear as crystal. There shall be no night there, no moon, no light of the sun by day. There will be no temple in it, for God and the Lamb are the temple of it. There will be no tears there, nor pain, nor sorrow, nor death. There will be no marrying. There will be no failure there. Ah! what a strange place is heaven, if all of our present conceptions differ so greatly from the revelation of the apostle. It must be a strange city to us whose gates are of single pearls. The most clearly human characteristic, it seems to me, is failure. We toil, and labor, and hope, and fail. We conceive a master painting only to fail to execute it. We fancy a great poem, but hang our heads in disappointment that we cannot write it down. We have hoped some day to be pure in heart and to have clean hands, but still our hands are sooted and unclean. But in heaven every gate is of a single pearl, and I believe our conceptions here will be all changed there. There the poet will strive and attain. There the artist will imagine and complete his work. In heaven every hope that we have held dear shall blos-

som like the fruit, flowers in the early days of the spring. Every activity will be carried on, but the ghost of failure will not haunt.

The Gates Are Magnificent

And heaven, as revealed by its gates, will be a place far richer than our present conceptions. We have never conceived of anything quite as costly as a gate of a single pearl. Such splendor and richness lie beyond our fabled wealth. I have seen the Regent and Mazarin diamonds worth combined more than four million dollars, and yet these would serve but as rare gems to stud the gate of a single pearl. Once a great-hearted man sold all his possessions until he bought the pearl of great price. He held it in the hollow of his hand, a comparatively small, beautiful jewel, but the gates of heaven are each of a single pearl. A little girl was blind from her birth. A skilled surgeon had operated upon the sightless eyes. The bandages were in place until, when the physician had properly prepared her, the coverings were removed and she saw the daylight. Her rapture was beyond bounds and she cried in an ecstasy, "O mother! we are in heaven!" I am sure that you and I shall be satisfied when we awake. The beauty of the skies, the splendor of the noonday, the grandeur of the meadow-grass and the glistening peak of white snow fields are serving but as the indices to the beauties within the gates of heaven.

"There's a home in that land
At the Father's right hand,
There are mansions whose joys are untold,
And perennial spring,
Where the birds ever sing,
And nothing can ever grow old."

The Triumphant Tear

Heaven is attained through much tribulation—for every gate is of one pearl.

The pearl is found in the shell of the pearl-oyster. A mote of dust insinuates itself into the body of the oyster which irritates and frets. Immediately the living oyster throws a fluid about the mote which in turn crystallizes until the pearl is perfected. Men are making pearls now by boring through the oyster's covering shell and inserting the grain of disturbing dust. The finest pearls are found in the deepest seas. And so "these are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." It is not an easy pathway that leads to Mount Zion, it is sinuous and steep and stony. The thorns and thistles of our bosoms pierce many places before they blossom. Apollyon is to be met, the Giant Despair is to be outwitted, hills of Difficulty must be climbed, stupors of languor must be shaken off, and after the toil and tilling, the planting and the pruning, the song of the harvester will ring on the hills of Zion. Sickness, distress, loss, world-weariness, deceiving friendships but serve. Every gate of heaven is of a single pearl. He who would enter must grow through the night.

> "When His steps
> Were on the mighty waters, when we went
> With trembling heart thro' nights of pain and loss,
> His smile was sweeter, and His love more dear,
> And only heaven is better than to walk
> With Christ at midnight over moonless seas."

The gates are open on all sides. "On the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates,

and on the west three gates." "And the gates of the city shall not be shut at all by day."

He who runs from pursuing sins will find his path opening before gates of pearl, and they are not closed at day and neither by night are they locked. He who is raised upward by a cross will find at the summit the gates of heaven on the four sides of the walls whose foundations are precious stones. Within the gates are the multitudes—songs like a mighty rush of waters roll about the throne; rejoicings such as Israel shouted when the high priest came from within the veil vibrate along the tessellated streets, and that innumerable company who now are like him—with the riches of eternal possessions in their hands, and the radiance of heaven-lighted faces expectantly scanning the gates, these shall receive those who attain and the King shall give them a crown of life.

Before George Washington died he said, "Gentlemen, I am dying, but, thank God, I am not afraid to die." Dr. Henry G. Weston, the late president of Crozer Seminary, said, when they asked him how it was: "I am as happy as I could be, and I would not be any happier." Florence Foster said with tears triumphant before the gates of pearl: "Mother, the hill tops are covered with angels; they beckon me homeward. I bid you good-bye."

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